Mar. 19, 1984

THE NEW YORKER

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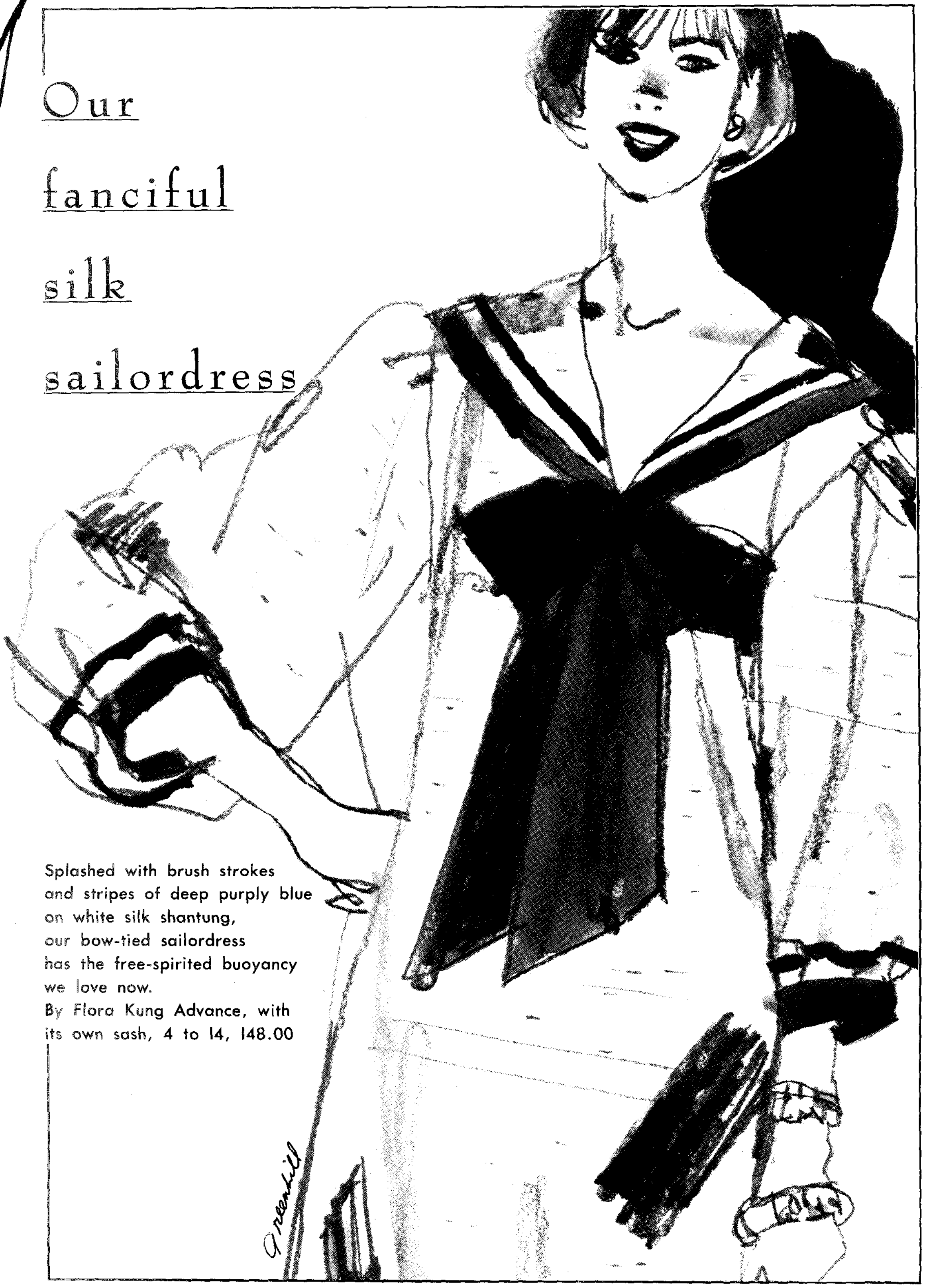

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

And a Nightingale Sang . . .—A pleasant comedy about life in England during the Second World War. Written by C. P. Taylor and directed by Terry Kinney. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/12/83.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre, Lincoln Center. 799-9100. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Awake and Sing!—A revival of a play that is almost half a century old and that shows its age. Still, what a pleasingly ardent and optimistic writer Odets was at twenty-eight! The present production fails him on almost every count. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 581-0720. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Baby—Everything you may not have wanted to ask about having a baby—a cheering musical for doctors if not for lay people. (12/12/83) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Beckett Plays—Three brief plays by Samuel Beckett. The haunting "Catastrophe," starring Kevin O'Connor, first appeared in this magazine. Alan Schneider is the impeccable director. (6/27/83) (Harold Clurman, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2370. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.)

Broken Eggs—Eduardo Machado's entertaining comedy about a well-heeled, homesick Cuban family in exile in Los Angeles takes place during a wedding at a local country club. The performance, under James Hammerstein's direction, is brisk and stylish. (3/5/84) (Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St. 247-4982. Wednesday through Saturday at 8, and Sunday at 7. Matinée Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, March 18.)

La Cage aux Folles—A dazzling production of a musical that has little wit and a lot of phony sentimentality about the tenderhearted family life of homosexuals. The music, by Jerry Herman, is Broadway-romantic. The two superb stars are George Hearn and Gene Barry. (9/5/83) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Cinders—This play, by the exiled Polish dramatist Janusz Glowacki, is set in a girls' reform school whose Orwellian atmosphere is enhanced by the arrival of a film director and his crew to make a documentary movie based on "Cinderella." With Lucinda Jenney, Robin Gammell, and George Guidall, among others. (3/5/84) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Danube—A young American and his Hungarian wife teeter on the edge of doom in Hungary. The originality and wit of this play, by Maria Irene Fornés, are eventually overwhelmed by the silliness of surrealism. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, March 18.)

Equity Library Theatre—A revival of **up in central park** (music by Sigmund Romberg and book and lyrics by Herbert and Dorothy Fields) is the sixth in this season's series of eight productions. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, April 1. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

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Fen—In spite of fine performances by Pamela Reed, Ellen Parker, and David Strathairn, among other American actors, Caryl Churchill's play about a farming community in East Anglia has lost some of its original mystery and force. Even so, there are many good scenes. Les Waters was the excellent director. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Fool for Love—Sam Shepard's play is as near a miracle as makes no matter—mysterious, funny, and beautiful. It is about two battling, loving lovers in a motel room at the edge of the Mojave Desert and about many other matters as well. Will Patton and Moira Harris have the leading roles. Mr. Shepard directed. (6/6/83) (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Hey, Ma . . . Kaye Ballard—A musical starring and written by Kaye Ballard. Original music and lyrics by David Levy and Leslie Eberhard, plus standards by George Gershwin, Cole Porter, and others. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3; special matinée Wednesday, March 21, at 2:30.)

Isn't It Romantic—A spirited revival of Wendy Wasserstein's sometimes painful but always witty comedy about a pair of female "best friends" at age twenty-eight, and especially about the trials of one of them, Janie Blumberg. The script has been somewhat revised, and the production, under Gerald Gutierrez's direction, is much fuller than it was originally. With Lisa Banes, Peg Murray, Barbara Barrie, Jerry Laning, Stephen Pearlman, Tom Robbins, Cristine Rose, and Chip Zien. (12/26/83) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Killing of Sister George—An adequate revival of Frank Marcus's cheesy play about a lesbian actress whose part on a British soap opera is cancelled. Ann MacMillan has the title role, and Tandy Cronyn is good as her simpering lover. (11/21/83) (Susan Bloch Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 242-7800. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, March 18.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Sigmund Romberg's **the desert song.** (Eastside, 334 E. 74th St. 861-2288. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30)

The Man Who Could See Through Time—A play by Terri Wagener, with Bob Gunton and Les-

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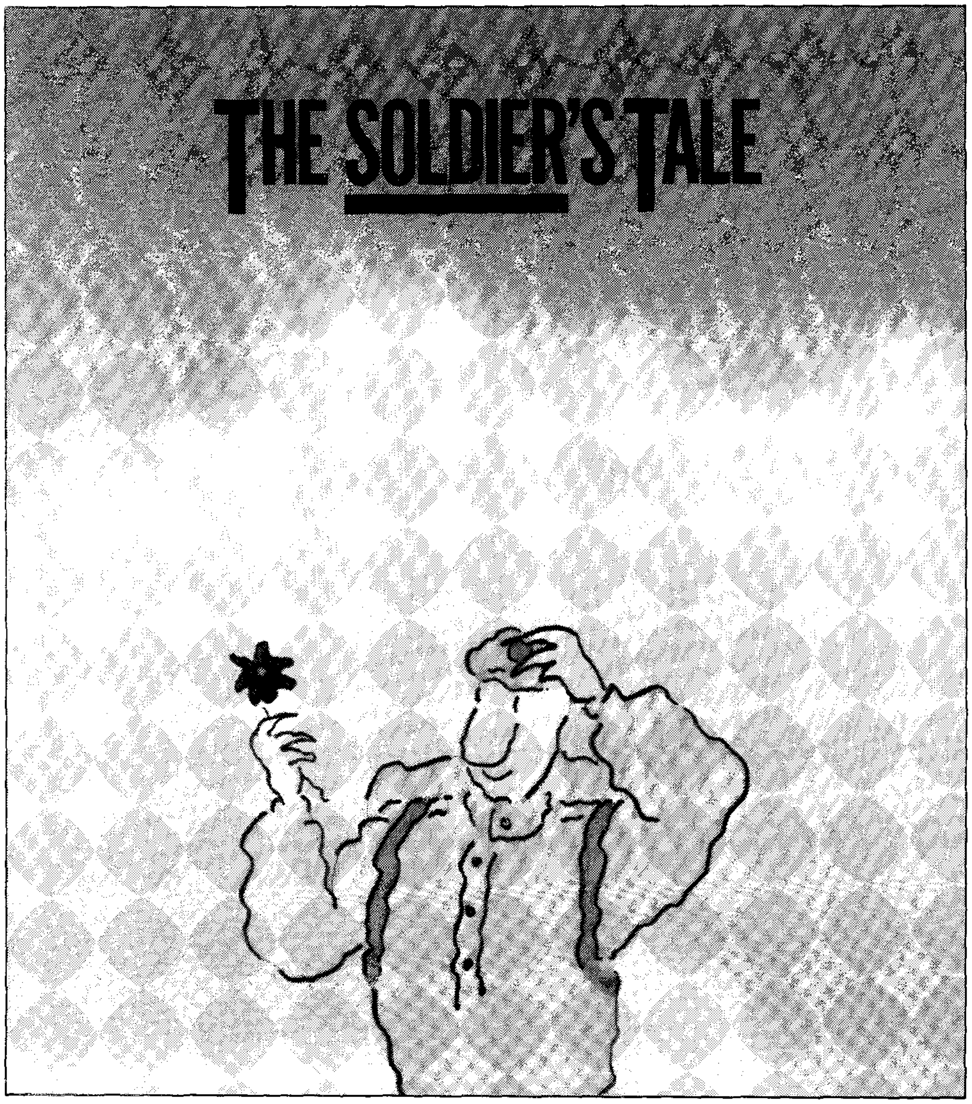
Great Performances

PRESENTS



Igor Stravinsky's Russian folk story "The Soldier's Tale" is magically captured in animation by R.O. Blechman.

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lie Geraci. (Ark Theatre Company, 131 Spring St. 431-6285. Thursdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Mensch Meier—A tedious drama by West German playwright Franz Xaver Kroetz, translated by Roger Downey. (Manhattan Theatre Club, 321 E. 73rd St. 472-0600. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, March 18.)

Mirror Theatre Company—A season of revivals in alternating repertory: Susan Glaspell's **INHERITORS;** Clifford Odets' **PARADISE LOST,** starring Geraldine Page; and John Colton and Clemence Randolph's **RAIN.** (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. For tickets and information about play scheduling, call 223-6440.)

Negro Ensemble Company—A revival of **COLORED PEOPLE'S TIME,** by Leslie Lee, is the final production of the season. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30.)

New Vic Theatre of London—Presenting a one-week engagement of a play called **DRACULA, OR A PAIN IN THE NECK,** by Phil Woods and Michael Bogdanov. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 874-1717. Monday, March 19, at 7; Tuesday through Friday, March 20-23, at 8; Saturday, March 24, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, March 25, at 3.)

Noises Off—The funniest, fastest-moving farce in many a long year, written by a Martian named Michael Frayn. (12/19/83) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 245-3430. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Painting Churches—A disappointing revival of Tina Howe's beautiful play about an artist who goes to Boston to help her old parents close up their house on Beacon Hill, and to paint their portrait. (Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Real Thing—A very funny and yet unnerving comedy by Tom Stoppard. The fine cast is headed by Jeremy Irons and Glenn Close. (1/16/84) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2. Special performance for the Actors' Fund Sunday, March 18, at 7.)

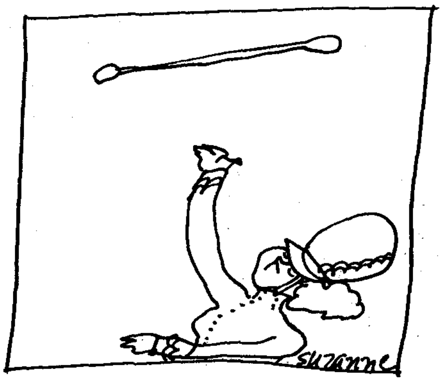
The Rink—A lavishly produced musical that unwisely devotes itself not to its agreeable songs (by John Kander and Fred Ebb) but to the bickering of an estranged mother and daughter—Chita Rivera and Liza Minnelli—and the imminent destruction of an old roller-skating rink. Peter Larkin designed the superb scenery. (2/20/84) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Rockaby—The presence of the witty and wonderful English actress Billie Whitelaw makes a special occasion of these three brief, extraordinary plays by Samuel Beckett. (2/27/84) (Samuel Beckett Theatre, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2826. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3. No performances Wednesday through Sunday, March 14-18.)

Second City Company—Presenting a revue called "Orwell That Ends Well." (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Street Theatre—A comedy by Doric Wilson. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 4.)

La Tragédie de Carmen—Peter Brook has picked up Bizet's gorgeous opera and given it a good shaking, with the result that it now lasts but eighty minutes and is assuredly more Brook than Bizet. With several casts, uneven in quality. (11/28/83) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 787-6868. Performances in English on Mondays and Tuesdays at 8:30, and Wednesdays at 2:30 and 8:30; in French on Thursdays and Fridays at 8:30, and Saturdays at 2:30 and 8:30.)



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Twenty Year Friends—A play by J. E. Gaines. Opens Thursday, March 15, and will run through Sunday, April 1. (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Woza Albert!—Percy Mtwa and Mbongeni Ngema, two adroit and witty African actors, are the entire cast and also the authors (with their director, Barney Simon) of this spirited, heartfelt play about the coming of Christ to South Africa. (3/5/84) (Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Zorba—Anthony Quinn and Lila Kedrova star in this revival of the 1968 musical. An oddly woebegone production. (10/24/83) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS:** A remembrance of things past, by Neil Simon. The hero is a sex-obsessed fifteen-year-old. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6222. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DREAMGIRLS:** The slickest possible production of a musical comedy whose book, music, and lyrics are almost totally lacking in character. If Michael Bennett, the director, had been a Union general, the Civil War would have lasted about twenty minutes. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 9,936 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. With Jerry Orbach and Anne Rogers. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 246-0730. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant, and it speaks and sings in the menacing baritone of Ron Taylor. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **MY ONE AND ONLY:** A joyous keepsake of Gershwin songs, neatly tucked into a new book by Peter Stone and Timothy S. Mayer. Twiggy and Tommy Tune head the superb cast. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 757-7164. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **ON YOUR TOES:** Not the least taint of patronizing mars this revival of the Rodgers and Hart classic musical of 1936. The director, George Abbott, helped to write the original book and, at ninety-six, evidently has a tenacious recollection of how things were and how they ought to be. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 977-9370. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **TORCH SONG TRILOGY:** Three plays—humorous, sad, sentimental, and witty—by Harvey Fierstein. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **TRUE WEST:** Sam Shepard's lively comedy about two rival brothers in California. Gary Sinise was the excellent director. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Forbidden Broadway '84—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30.)

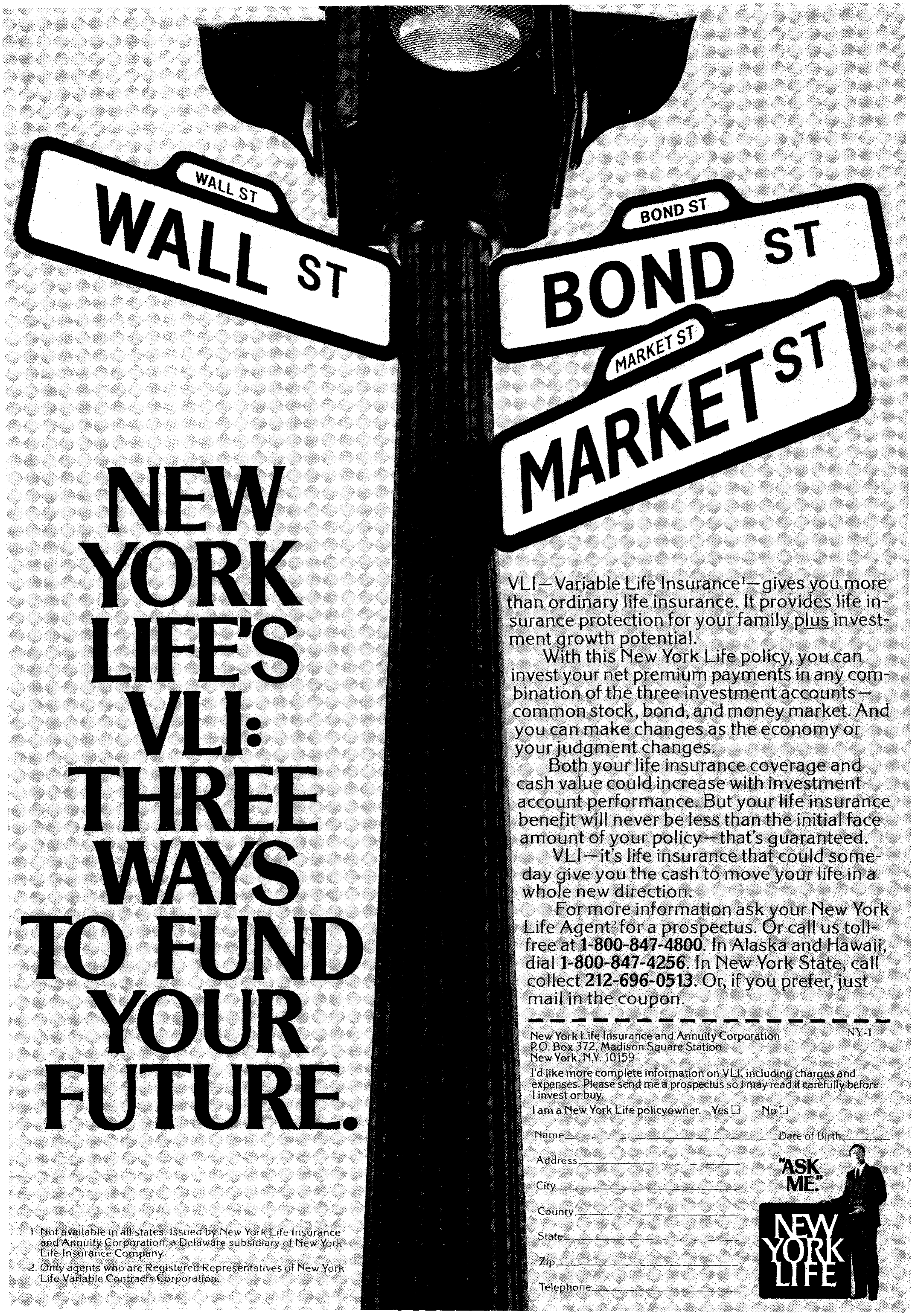
Serious Bizness—This little show, written by Jennifer Allen, David Babcock, Winnie Holzman, and Don Perman, and performed by Mr. Babcock, Carey Cromelin, Mr. Perman, and Nealla Spano, is as humorous as anything in town. (O'Neals', 147 W. 43rd St. 764-6200. Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10:30.)

Hasty Pudding Show—A musical called "Jungle Belles" is this year's Harvard undergraduate production. (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. Friday, March 23, at 8; Saturday, March 24, at 5 and 9; and Sunday, March 25, at 5. For information about tickets, call 944-1011.)

DANCE

Martha Graham Dance Company—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday evening, March 14: "Clytemnestra." . . . ¶ Thursday, evening, March 15: "Seraphic Dialogue," "Deaths and Entrances," "Phaedra's Dream," and "Diversion of Angels." . . . ¶ Friday evening, March 16: "Diversion of Angels," "Errand Into the Maze," "Phaedra's Dream," and "Acts of Light." . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, March 17: "Cave of the Heart," "Phaedra's Dream," and "The Rite of Spring." . . . ¶ Saturday evening, March 17: "Embattled Garden," "Primitive Mysteries," "Phaedra's Dream," and "Acts of Light." . . . ¶ Sunday matinée, March 18: "Embattled Garden," "Primitive Mysteries," "Cave of the Heart," and "Diversion of Angels." . . . ¶ Sunday evening, March 18: "Seraphic Dialogue," "The Rite of Spring," and "Acts of Light." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Weeknights at 8 and Sundays at 7. Matinées at 2.)

Merce Cunningham Dance Company—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday,



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March 14, at 8: "Torse," "Pictures," and "Channels/Inserts." . . . ¶ Thursday, March 15, at 8: "Coast Zone," "Inlets 2," and "Roadrunners." . . . ¶ Friday, March 16, at 8: "Coast Zone," "Quartet," and "Channels/Inserts." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 17, at 2: "Trails," "Quartet," and "Channels/Inserts." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 17, at 8: "Inlets 2," "Pictures," and "Channels/Inserts." . . . ¶ Sunday, March 18, at 2: "Coast Zone," "Pictures," and "Roadrunners." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

Paul Taylor Dance Company—Opening performances of a four-week engagement that will run through Sunday, April 15—Tuesday, March 20, at 7, and Thursday, March 22, at 8: "Airs," "Big Bertha," "Duet from Lento," and ". . . Byzantium" (première) . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 21, and Friday, March 23, at 8: "Arden Court," "Runes," and "Sunset." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 24, at 8: "Diggity," "Nightshade," and "Mercuric Tidings." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

Lotte Goslar's Pantomime Circus—The dance-mime and her company. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 20-21, at 7; Thursday and Friday, March 22-23, at 8; and Saturday and Sunday, March 24-25, at 3 and 8.)

Pilar Rioja—A five-week engagement. (Reportorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, April 8.)

Charles Moulton Dance Company—Final performances of "Variety Show," a full-length work. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Wednesday through Saturday, March 14-17, at 8, and Sunday, March 18, at 3.)

Juilliard Dance Ensemble—Benefit performances of new and repertory works. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Thursday through Saturday, March 15-17, at 8, and Sunday, March 18, at 3. For tickets, call 874-7515, Wednesday through Friday between 9:30 and 5:30.)

Rachel Harms Dance Company—New and repertory works. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. Thursday through Saturday, March 15-17, at 8. For tickets, call 691-5591.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**RONNY WHYTE,** a debonair, straight-arrow baritone and capable pianist—dig his left hand—has moved into the Oak Room Wednesdays through Saturdays from nine-thirty to one, and into the Rose Room Sundays from five-thirty to eleven. Dining.

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—Small, narrow, chatty, and nautical. Tenor saxophonist **CLIFFORD JORDAN** and drummer **VERNEL FOURNIER** can be found on the very small bandstand on Friday and Saturday, March 16-17; on Friday and Saturday, March 23-24, pianist **ANDY LAVERNE** will be aboard with his trio. Sets at ten, eleven-thirty, and one. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** has returned to this club to sing in her small, delicate, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice. Early-evening concerts Wednesdays through Saturdays from six-thirty to eight-thirty.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—**JEAN CARN** sings here through Sunday, March 18; on Monday, March 19, Brenda Buffalino, and the Amy Duncan trio will perform; and starting Tuesday, March 20, bassist **JACO PASTORIUS** and his band will be present. Music from ten. Every night but Monday, trumpeter **TED CURSON** conducts after-hours (real late, after the last set) jam sessions.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The varied schedule: Wednesday, March 14, **DE DANANN;** Thursday, March 15, Dr. Demento and Weird Al Yankovic; Friday and Saturday, March 16-17, the **ROCHES;** Sunday, March 18, singer **PATTI LU PONE;** Wednesday, March 21, comics Pat Paulson and Chris Rush; Thursday, March 22, Robert Hunter; and Friday and Saturday, March 23-24, the **ROCHES.** Sundays through Thursdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and midnight. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—The epitome of an intimate, dark-wood-panelled, sophisticated New York bar. Pianist **RONNIE MATHEWS** and bassist **RAY DRUMMOND** work together through Saturday, March 17; on Sunday, March 18, bassist **JACO PASTORIUS** and guitarist **HIRAM BULLOCK** will drop by; and on Monday, March 19, pianist **RICHIE BEIRACH** and bassist **EDDIE GOMEZ** will begin a six-night visit. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Broadway Joe's, 315 W. 46th St., near Eighth Ave. (246-6513)—The urbanely swinging **JIMMY LYON,** who plays piano until ten in Peacock Alley at the Waldorf, a very, *very* subdued room, comes to this convivial, buzzing, smallish barroom, where he gets an impressive second wind. He's here from ten-thirty to two Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

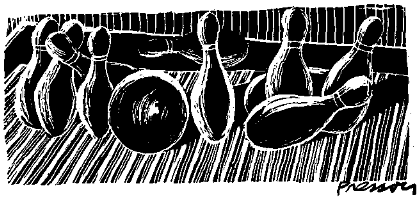
Carlyle Hotel, Madision Ave., at 76th St. (744-1600)—**SYLVIA SYMS'** self-conscious between-song patter—about herself, about Frank Sinatra, about Johnny Mercer (to whom she's paying tribute right now), or about anything at all—can be forgiven, because when she sings, her voice virtually floats. She's in the Café Carlyle with pianist **TONY MONTE,** bassist **STEVE LA SPINA,** and drummer **AKIRA TANA** Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. Dining. . . . ¶ Bebop pianist and ballad singer **BARBARA CARROLL** will be found in the Bemelmens Bar from nine every night but Sunday.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The Bowery Institute of Rock and Roll: Wednesday, March 14, Clairvoyant, Eieio, and Secret Sect; Thursday, March 15, Zone, Lieutenant 70, and the Grey District; Friday, March 16, Tribe Numbers and Rebo 5; Saturday, March 17, the Egyptians and Paleface; Sunday, March 18, **PETER STAMPFEL** & the Bottle Caps; and Tuesday, March 20, Onan Flan, Point of View, On the Edge, and Limousine. Monday is showcase night. Music from long after nine-thirty.

Cookery, 21 University Pl., at 8th St. (674-4450)—Currently a singer's room: **CARRIE SMITH** owns it every night but Monday, when it's closed. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—Bluegrass, string-band, and Irish, British, and American folk music made by visiting players from New England, the Eastern seaboard, and Appalachia is the fare, along with pitchers of beer. Wednesday, March 14, the Irish Celebration; Friday, March 16, Conway & Ryan, with John Hahn; Saturday, March 17, Wicky Sears and the Irish Mists; Wednesday, March 21, Allan Carr and Jane Rothfield; and Saturday, March 24, the Tompkins County Horseflies. Music from eight on Wednesdays and from nine on Saturdays.

Eddie Condon's, 144 W. 54th St. (265-8277)—The house band swings it Tuesdays through Saturdays from eight-thirty to two. On Sunday, March 18, the Joel Helleny quintet will be present. Mondays are claimed by Ed Polcer's quintet; the Bill Simon and George Simon quintet is here on Wednesdays from five-thirty to eight-thirty; and on Fridays Danny D'Imperio's trio performs from five-thirty to eight-thirty. Dining.



Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—**FREDA PAYNE** sings with backup from pianist **BOBBY ENRIQUEZ'S** trio through Sunday, March 18, and on Tuesday, March 20, earthy pop-soul pianist Ramsey Lewis will take over. Sets begin after nine. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Folk City, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—Considerably more musical than Tie City or Food City. Friday, March 16, **TOUCHSTONE,** with **TRIONA NI DHOMHNAILL,** at eight and eleven-thirty; Saturday, March 17, **THE IRISH TRADITION,** at eight and eleven-thirty; Sunday, March 18, Jane Brucker; Monday, March 19, Tom Goodkind, at seven-thirty; Tuesday, March 20, David Cale and Susan Schneider, at nine; Wednesday, March 21, Peter Holsapple, John Collins & Friends, the Wynbrandts, and Tom Mandel, at nine; Friday, March 23, Jesse Winchester, at eight and eleven; and Saturday, March 24, Ferron at eight and eleven. Thursdays from nine are comedy nights.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St., near Prince St. (925-2415)—The schedule at this SoHo night club: through Saturday, March 17, Patricia Barber and Michael Arnopol; Sunday and Monday, March 18-19, Betty Shirley, with Michael Grossman; Tuesday through Thursday, March 20-22, pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and bassist **CECIL MC BEE;** and Friday and Saturday, March 23-24, **KIRK LIGHTSEY** with **CECIL MC BEE** and guitarist **KEVIN EUBANKS.** Sets begin Mondays through Thursdays at eight-thirty, ten, and eleven-thirty; Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty, eleven, and one; and Sundays at seven, eight-thirty, and ten. Dining.

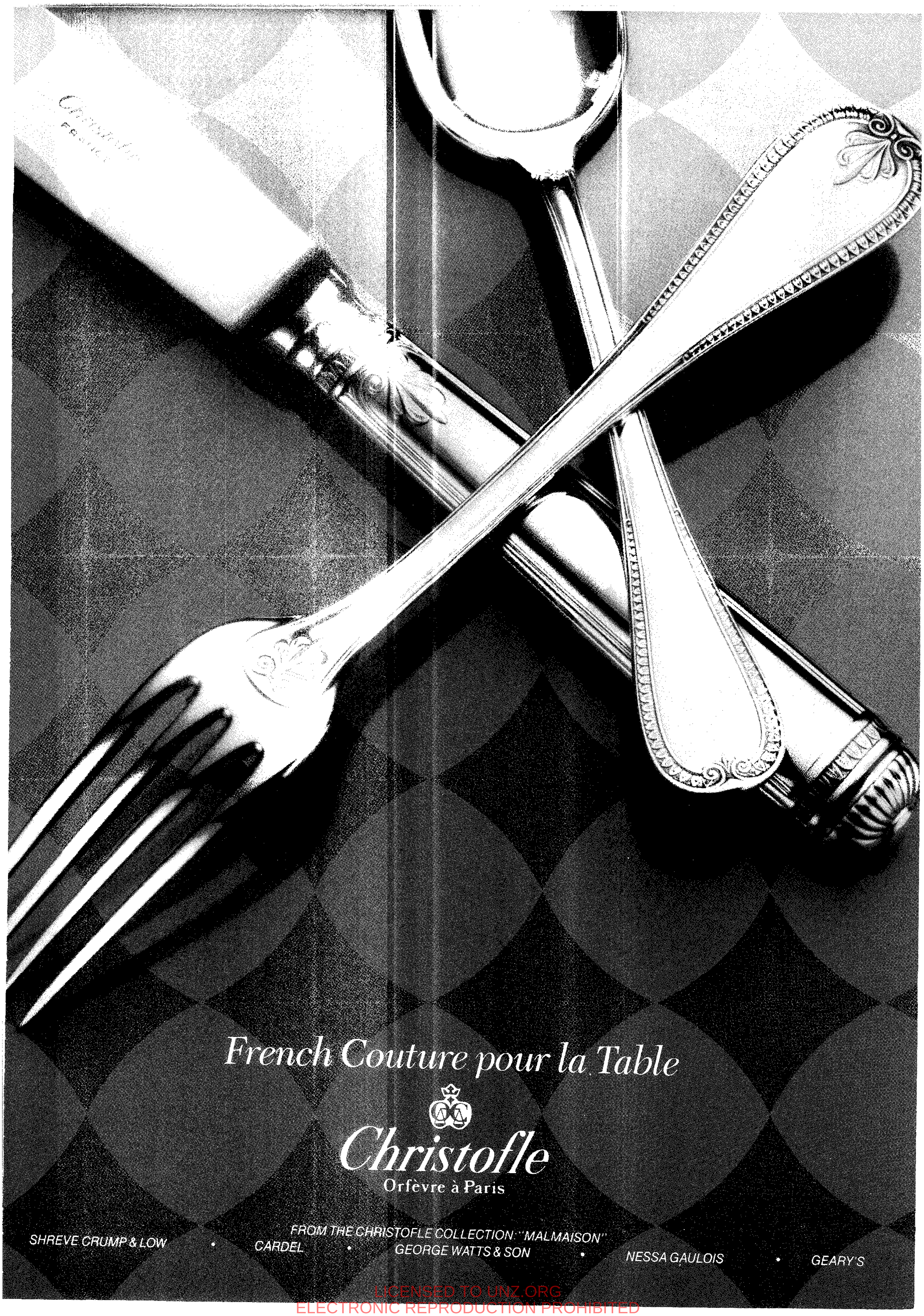
Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Mondays, singer-pianist **BROOKS KERR** performs with bassist John Belzaguy; Tuesdays are given over to guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE;** Wednesday through Sunday, March 14-18, Alicia Sherman sings with guitarist Matt McErlean's trio; and starting Wednesday, March 21, guitarist **ATTILA ZOLLER,** one of the best-kept secrets in jazz, will move in with his trio. All these groups begin after ten. Mondays through Fridays, pianist Don Golson plays from five until ten, and the same hours on Sundays are devoted to **BROOKS KERR.**

Hanratty's, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—The East Side twin—it's actually a little fancier—of a West Side hangout. This one attracts neatly dressed couples and hires jazz pianists. (The other attracts some of the West Side literati and plugs in a jukebox. **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** who looks like a wisp of a girl but who is actually a fireball of a stride player, works Tuesdays through Saturdays. Monday's pianist is **DICK HYMAN,** and the Sunday person is Keith MacDonald. Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine. Dining.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant corner restaurant and bar that is crowded with good listeners listening to good piano-bass teams. The piano-bass teams: **RICHARD WYANDS** and **RON CARTER** through Saturday, March 17, and **JACK WILSON** and **BOOTS MALESON** beginning Tuesday, March 20. Music from ten. No music Sundays and Mondays.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—An authentic Texas hangout for expatriate Texans, for New Yorkers, and for French tourists. The music is usually good solid blues, rock, folk, or country, and it starts after eight-thirty. The lineup: Wednesday, March 14, the simultaneously rural and urbane blues and jazz singer and pianist **MOSE ALLISON** and Mojo Bone; Thursday, March 15, John Phillips; Sunday, March 18, Max Creek and Buddy Cage & Bad Dog; Tuesday, March 20, Thunder & Lightning and Buddy Cage & Bad Dog; Wednesday, March 21, George Strait; and Thursday, March 22, Soul Brother No. 1 **JAMES BROWN** and Mojo Bone. Dining.

Lush Life, 184 Thompson St., at Bleecker St. (228-3788)—A comfortable and first-rate jazz club. The Mitch Frohman Big Band occupies the stand on Wednesday, March 14,



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

and Thursday through Saturday, March 15-17, vibraharpist **JAY HOGGARD** will lead his combo. Sets start at nine-thirty. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**DOLLY DAWN** has moved in to sing Depression-era songs with a quintet that features **DOC CHEATHAM** on trumpet and **EDDIE BAREFIELD** on saxophone. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. On Monday nights from nine to midnight, the New Orleans Funeral and Ragtime Band occupies the bandstand. Wednesdays through Fridays from five to seven, there's a jazz session presided over by **DICK SUDHALTER, MARTY NAPOLEON, FRANK TATE,** and **FRED STOLL.** Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—The hippest spot on Columbus Avenue is this club, which is known for the R. & B. and jazz bands that have been performing here for more than a decade. **CARMEN LUNDY,** a stirring young jazz singer, performs with the **DANNY MIXON** trio in a benefit appearance on Thursday, March 15. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

Other End, 149 Bleecker St. (673-7030)—Folk, blues, rock, and jazz in an intimate room that has fine sight lines to the stage. Wednesday, March 14, Who's Your Daddy, the Cameras, and Art; Thursday, March 15, Spencers, Kim Parent, Tone Controls, and Whirling Dervishes; Friday, March 16, Tickets, Sherryl Marshall, and Pep in the Cat; Saturday, March 17, Lazoo, the Igloos, and Fat Shadows; Monday, March 19, Casselberry-Duprée and Richard Weinman, plus a movie; Wednesday, March 21, County Line, Joanne Filips & the Suspect, and the Adventurers; Thursday, March 22, the Action Faction, Mighty Lovers, and Bill Block & the Big Band; Friday, March 23, Sweetwater, Majesty, and Tweed Shade & the In Crowd; and Saturday, March 24, Alert the Media, Richie Scarlett, the Seducers, and the Habit. Shows start at ten weeknights and at nine on Sundays. Dining and dancing.

Peacock Alley, in the Waldorf-Astoria, Park Ave. at 49th St. (355-3000)—**JIMMY LYON** is playing piano in this quiet room, which functions as a sort of passageway connecting the hotel lobby with a dining room. Mr. Lyon, who has accompanied Mabel Mercer throughout the past decade, has a touch that seems magically smooth and cushioned, and his timing is unassailable. He's on hand Tuesdays through Saturdays from six to ten.

Peppermint Lounge, 100 Fifth Ave., at 15th St. (989-9505)—Rock and roll disguised as the Late Show: Friday, March 16, La Dolce Vita and Liquid Liquid; Saturday, March 17, Holly & the Italians '84; and Saturday, March 24, Crossfire Choir. Live music from way past your bedtime. Dancing.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—Jack Morgan and the Russ Morgan Orchestra are now in charge of the dance music, the dining music, and the looking-out-the-window music up here on the sixty-fifth floor. Music Tuesdays through Thursdays from seven to one; Fridays and Saturdays from eight to two; and Sundays from six to midnight. Dining and dancing.

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Red Blazer Too, 1576 Third Ave., at 88th St. (876-0440)—A large, busy establishment that has a slightly touristy feel to it. Traditional jazz is presented from about nine every night but Sunday, when it begins at seven. Dining.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—A ballroom that dates from 1935 when the building was remodelled—the building itself dates from 1889—to accommodate neighborhood social-club dances. It has been turned into a sort of Avalon Ballroom East. Rock from the fifties, sixties, seventies, and eighties. Friday and Saturday, March 16-17, Mink Deville and Troublemaker; Friday, March 23, Paul Young & the Royal Family. Shows tend to begin sometime after midnight. Dancing.

Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—A second-floor jazz club in which most of the walls are refreshingly austere. Wednesday, March 14, French hornist **JOHN CLARK** and his quintet, which features **JAY HOGGARD** on vibes and **RYO KAWASAKI** on guitar; Thursday through Sunday, March 15-18, the whirling, rhythmic **NEW YORK SAMBA BAND;** Tuesday and Wednesday, March 20-21, guitarists **JOHN ABERCROMBIE** and **JOHN SCOFIELD;** and Thursday through Sunday, March 22-25, the crackling-sharp **HEATH BROTHERS.** On Mondays, the **GIL EVANS** big band takes charge. Much of the music is amplified jazz-rock, and it runs from nine-thirty.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great place to listen to Brazilian music—Brazilian-jazz groups, samba bands, and all-percussion ensembles that perform *carnaval* music—and it tends to be swirling, heady, wonderful stuff. On its busy weekends, the club feels like the rush hour in Rio. Wednesday, March 14, Mario Rivera & the Salsa Refugees; Thursday, March 15, the African Connection; Friday and Saturday, March 16-17, **LOREMIL MACHADO & THE SARAVA BAHIA BAND;** Tuesday, March 20, Mario Toledo & Noites Cariocas; Wednesday, March 21, flutist **DAVE VALENTIN;** Thursday, March 22, Kimati Dinizulu & the Kotoko Society; and Friday and Saturday, March 23-24, **PÉ-DE-BOI.** Music from ten. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Trumpeter **JOHNNY COLES** and saxophonist-flutist **FRANK WESS** co-pilot a quintet through Saturday, March 17; Sunday and Monday, March 18-19, will belong to tenor saxophonist **FRANK LOWE;** and Tuesday through Saturday, March 20-24, pianist **JOHN HICKS** and an **ALL-STAR SEXTET—HANNIBAL MARVIN PETERSON, BRANFORD MARSALIS, GARY BARTZ, RAY DRUMMOND,** and **IDRIS MUHAMMAD**—will be on hand. Shows from about ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St., at Irving Pl. (777-5077)—Your simple, basic, unposh blues hangout. The blues, rock, and Irish lineup: Wednesday, March 14, **ELLIOTT MURPHY;** Thursday, March 15, Firesign, an R. & B. band; Friday, March 16, Irish music night; and Saturday, March 17, Buster Poindexter (**DAVID JOHANSEN** to his mom). Sundays the Delancey Street Hawaiians perform. Music after ten.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—Mondays after nine are salsa nights in the barnlike downstairs room: on March 19, **OSCAR D'LEON** and **GRUPO FASCINACIÓN** trade sets, and electric violinist **MICHAL URBANIAK** will be the guest jazz soloist. . . . ¶ Meanwhile, out on the Terrace after nine-thirty bluesy pianist **HAROLD MABERN** works Tuesdays through Sundays, and jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** is also here on Tuesdays.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world are attracted to this basement. French pianist **MICHEL PETRUCCIANI** leads a trio through Sunday, March 18; on Tuesday, March 20, hard-bop guitar great **KENNY BURRELL** will arrive with his trio. Mondays are **MEL LEWIS** big-band nights. Music after ten.

West Boondock, 114 Tenth Ave., at 17th St. (929-9645)—A warm atmosphere, authentically prepared collard greens, and jazz pianists. The musicians: Wednesday, March 14, Samir Safwat; Thursday through Sunday, March 15-18, Kuni Mikami; Monday through Wednesday, March 19-21, Frank Jolliffe; and Thursday through Sunday, March 22-25, Joe Ruddick. Music nightly from eight-thirty until two.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food, beyond the pinball machines, is a room full of mostly swing music. Django's Music, a hot-jazz unit, is here through Saturday, March 17, and saxophonist **ALLEN EAGER** will move in on Wednesday, March 21. Sundays are claimed by pianist **DICK KATZ,** and Mondays and Tuesdays by pianist Ram Ramirez. Music from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, airy bar connected to a spacious, airy dining room by a spacious, airy passageway with tables and chairs and pianists, bassists, and guitarists in it. Pianist **LARRY WILLIS** collaborates with bassist **RUFUS REID** through Saturday, March 17; bebopper **JOE ALBANY** will take charge of the piano on Monday, March 19; and Tuesday through Saturday, March 20-24, **RONNIE MATHEWS** and **DAVID WILLIAMS** will play piano-bass duets. Sundays are the property of guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and his longtime sidekick, bassist **MICHAEL MOORE.** Music from about eight every night.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

International Music Stars—At the Nederlander Theatre, the second and third performers in the series. Through Sunday, March 18: Enrico Macias. . . . ¶ Starting Tuesday, March 20: Amália Rodrigues. (208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Josephine Livoti—With Bross Townsend, Harvie Swartz, and Greg Bandy. (Jazz Center of New York, 380 Lafayette St. 924-5026. Thursday, March 15, at 8 and 10.)

Jaki Byard and the Apollo Stompers—Jazz Cultural Theatre, Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th Sts. 244-0997. Friday and Saturday, March 16-17, at 10 and midnight.

Tania Maria—Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Friday, March 16, at 8.

Salsarengue Festival—With Oscar D'Leon, Hector Lavoe, Fernandito Villalona, Millie, Jocelyn y Los Vecinos, and others. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Friday, March 16, at 8:30.)

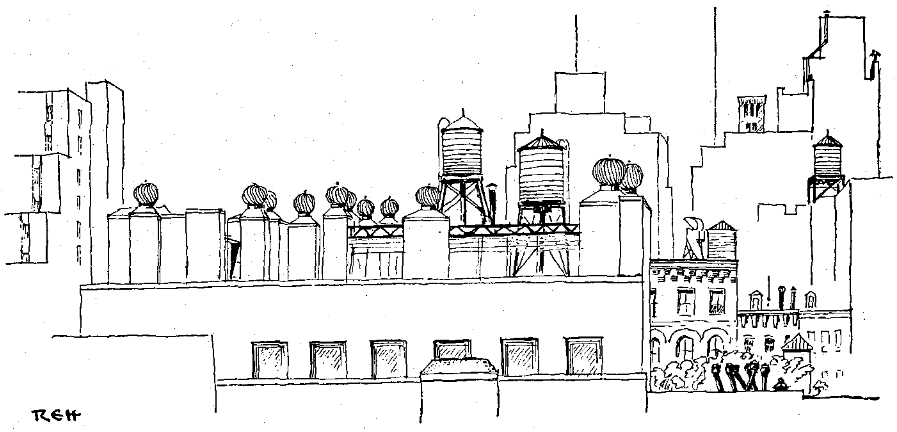
Jazztime '84—With Doug Sertl, Jon Faddis, Marvin Stamm, Chaka Khan, Sammy Cahn, Hinton Battle, the New York Break Dancers, and others. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 874-1717. Satuday, March 17, at 8.)

Tiny Grimes Trio—Jazz Cultural Theatre. Sunday, March 18, at 5.

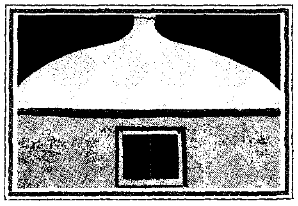
Duran Duran—Madison Square Garden. Monday, March 19, and Wednesday, March 21, at 7:30.

Marilyn Crispell—Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Tuesday, March 20, at 8.

Doo-Wopp, vol. VII—With Little Anthony, the Flamingos, the Moonglows, Arlene Smith and



COUNTERPOINT OF COLOR



When thinking of color, one could easily overlook (perhaps literally bypass) the influence of the architecture around us. This was strikingly brought home to us on a recent sojourn to Bermuda, where cottages painted brilliant pink, green, blue and beige are crowned with white roofs. Where stucco walls, painted layer upon layer, when chipped away, reveal a house's history and personality—much the same as color is used to lend character and depth to clothing.

What better backdrop, we thought, to display our own summer colors. Thus inspired, we discovered that the subtle, neutral tones and textures of our raw linen jacket freely interplayed with the soft shades of our silk cable knit sweater and Italian silk tie. The white of our cotton gabardine trousers acted as the perfect foil, in much the same way as white is used to enliven the local colors of the island. For us, neutral shades in natural fabrics is an ever-changing drama that will continue to delight and intrigue for as long as there is sunlight on a mid-summer's day.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

the Chantels, and others. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Friday and Saturday, March 23-24, at 8.)

Dick Wellstood and Kenny Davern—New School, 66 W. 12th St. Friday, March 23, at 6. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

Jeff Lorber Fusion and Allan Holdsworth I.O.U.—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Friday, March 23, at 8.

Orlando (Puntilla) Rios and Daniel Poncé—Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. 249-8950. Friday, March 23, at 8.

Mixed Bag—With David Crosby, Roger McGuinn, Rick Roberts, and John Sebastian. (Beacon Theatre. Friday, March 23, at 8.)

Irving Plaza—Friday, March 16: Winston Grennan's Ska Rocks. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 17: Major Thinkers. (Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 477-3728. Shows start after 11:30.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Pierre Alechinsky—Paintings in which bold, centered motifs are bordered in softer contrasting patterns. Through Saturday, March 17. (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th St.)

Harry Bertoia (1915-78)—A broad selection of this sculptor's abstract bronzes. Through March 31. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

Byron Browne (1907-61)—Abstract works on paper and paintings from the thirties through the fifties. Through April 14. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

John Chamberlain—Representative steel sculptures, some sections of which are painted in bright colors. Through March 31. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

Robert Cottingham—Photo-Realist works on paper; sometimes the same subject is rendered in different mediums—in graphite, for instance, and then again in watercolor. Through Friday, March 23. (Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. Open Mondays.)

Daniel Dallmann—Recent landscape and figure paintings. Through March 28. (Schoelkopf, 825 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

Robert De Niro—Semi-abstract still-lifes, portraits, and landscapes. Through April 7. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Enrico Donati—Abstract paintings that look as if they had been removed from a wall or the side of a building, thanks to the use of ground quartz in the medium. Through Saturday, March 24. (Gimpel, 1040 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Sam Francis—Early abstract paintings and works on paper. Through April 14. (Elkon, 1063 Madison Ave., at 80th St.)

Ed Garman and John Sennhauser (1907-78)—Nonobjective paintings from the thirties and forties by each artist. Through March 31. (Diamond, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Gregory Gillespie / Susan Barron—Recent paintings done with the startling realist skill this artist has achieved, plus a number of the small antic works he dashes off when he feels the need to cut loose. / Small delicate combinations of collage and drawing or collage and photograph. Through March 29. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Nancy Graves—Nature's products (bean pods, palm fronds, etc.) cast directly in bronze as

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part of spindly, openwork structures that reach as high as eight feet. Through March 29. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

John Adams Griefen—New abstract paintings. Through March 31. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

Leon Kroll (1884-1974)—A scene of New York before the elevateds came down is included in this show of twenty-odd paintings by an artist who was considered a boy wonder in the first two decades of this century. Through Saturday, March 24. (ACA, 21 E. 67th St.)

Fernand Léger (1881-1955)—Seventeen oils and eleven works on paper dating from the mid-twenties until the year he died. Through March 31. (Perls, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Richard Lindner (1901-78)—Paintings in mixed mediums from the sixties, mostly showing the demimondaine freaks he dignified by his attention. Through March 31. (Kouros, 831 Madison Ave., at 69th St.)

George Longfish—Big acrylic paintings made up largely of pictographic forms, except for realistic sketches of the artist's two young sons in one of them, by this American Indian of Tuscarora-Seneca lineage. Through Saturday, March 24. (Steinbaum, 903 Madison Ave., at 72nd St.)

Sue Miller / Richard Sheehan—Barns and fences and farmyard structures in general are the source of these low-keyed semi-abstract paintings. / Paintings by an artist who is especially fond of the sunlight and shadows found underneath big-city bridges. Through March 30. (Stone, 48 E. 86th St.)

Kenneth Price—Recent small abstract sculptures, each consisting of smooth facets cut into a rough lump of clay, which is then fired and painted. Through April 4. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Sandi Slone—Abstract paintings executed on canvases of all shapes and sizes, including two that are twelve feet long. Through March 31. (Acquavella, 18 E. 79th St.)

Hedda Sterne—Recent paintings. Through March 31. (CDS, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

John Stockdale / Julian B. Hyman—Paintings rendered in transparent fields of color. / Photographs. Through March 31. (Urdang, 23 E. 74th St.)

Melanie Wygonik—Sheets of paper covered with buttons, lace, and ribbons and stitched together in book form. (Browsing is encouraged and white gloves are provided.) Also, other works involving brightly colored pieces of fabric sewn onto linen, collage style. Through March 31. (Einstein, 243 E. 82nd St.)

Sculpture—Works in terra-cotta by Helen Beling, Carole Lewis, and Nina Winkel. Through March 27. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Valerio Adami—Paintings and drawings of distorted figures, done in clear, storybook colors by an Italian artist. Through Saturday, March 17. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

Jean-Paul Agosti—Watercolors of wooded landscapes and rocky cliffs. Through Saturday, March 17. (Iolas-Jackson, 52 E. 57th St.)

Leonard Baskin—New watercolors. Through March 31. (Kennedy, 40 W. 57th St.)

William Baziotes (1911-63)—Paintings from the fifties by an Abstract Expressionist. Through March 31. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Jack Beal and Joan Brown—Paintings from the early sixties, a time when both artists were working in a thickly impastoed style. Through March 29. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Ella Bergmann (1896-1971)—Drawings and collages by a Constructivist connected with the Bauhaus and the Dadaists. Through Saturday, March 17. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Daniel Brustlein—Muted colors and elegant draftsmanship mark these new paintings of Paris, Venice, and Cape Cod. Through March 31. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

Jim Dine—An art-store Venus de Milo inspired this spate of bronze sculptures and mixed-medium drawings; other bronze works include a series of gigantic heads perched on poles. Through Saturday, March 17. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Carolus Enckell / Peter Bellamy—Paintings done in primary colors and gray on slate or canvas, plus a sculpture in wood, by a Finnish artist new to this country. / Photographs of a hundred and sixteen contemporary New York artists—Eric Fischl, Donald Sultan, Bill Jensen, Louisa Chase, Judy Rifka, and so on. Through March 31. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

Alice Forman—Unusually large still-life paintings of vases of flowers—amaryllis, freesias, petunias, zinnias, begonias, primroses. Through March 31. (Kornblee, 20 W. 57th St.)

Alan Gussow / Charles Burchfield (1893-1967)—Cloth wall hangings, decorated with perforations and painted patterns, that reflect American Indian and Australian aborigine influences. / Watercolors and drawings. Through March 28. (Deutsch, 20 W. 57th St.)

George Harkins—Three large double-panel watercolors of waterside vegetation and the forest floor, painted in inexhaustible detail. Through March 31. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Maryann Harman—Semi-abstract landscapes of the Appalachian Mountains. Through March 31. (Haber Theodore, 24 W. 57th St.)

Clinton Hill—Paintings, constructions in wood, and works combining handmade paper and dyed pulp. Through March 31. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

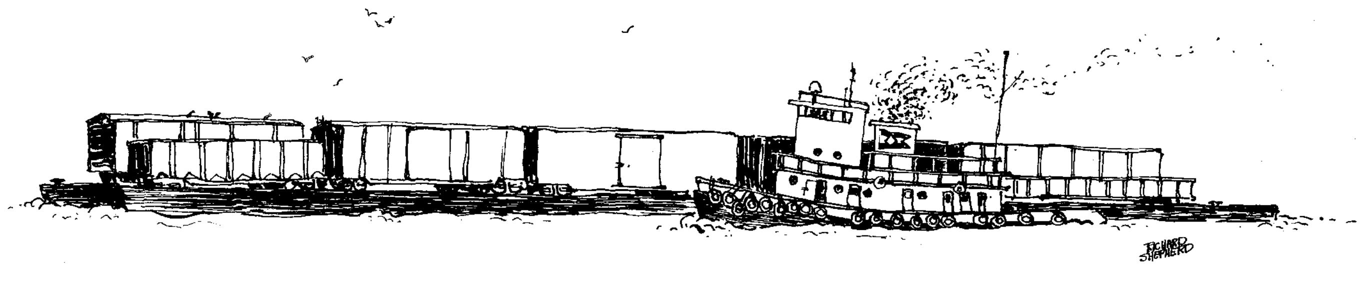
Richard Hunt—Recent welded-steel and welded-bronze sculptures. Through April 5. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Bill Jensen—A two-gallery show. Abstractions that seem richer in color than they have been in the past, by an artist with a large art-underground following, at the Washburn, 42 E. 57th St., and drawings from which the paintings evolved at the Washburn at 113 Greene St. Through March 31.

Daniel Lang—Glimpses of secluded spots in Scotland, Italy, Germany, and England, captured by this realist painter who keeps on the move. Through Saturday, March 17. (French, 41 W. 57th St.)

Pat Lasch—Sculptures in a variety of mediums and works on paper from the past year, all done while the artist completed a fellowship at the American Academy in Rome. Through March 31. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

Loren Madsen—Ink drawings, maquettes for



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

large sculptures, and a sculptural installation. Through March 31. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Eugène Mihaesco—Drawings and paintings ranging from political cartoons to quixotic watercolors, many of which have appeared on the cover of this magazine. Through April 7. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Hans Moller—Paintings, chiefly of Monhegan Island, Maine: in the daylight, under a night sky, and even during a lunar eclipse. Through March 31. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

Irving Petlin / Theodore Manolides—Bright paintings and pastels, including a portrait in oil of Meyer Schapiro. / Drawings. Through March 31. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Archie Rand—Recent mural-size and smaller acrylics on canvas. Through March 28. (De Nagy, 29 W. 57th St.)

Judy Rifka—Bathers, builders, Greek ruins, Beirut carnage are among the subjects taken on by this wide-ranging artist, whose mediums now include a thick mixture of oil and wax that seeps through a background of carpetmaker's mesh. Through Saturday, March 24. (Alexander, 20 W. 57th St.)

Setsuko—Delicate gouaches (still-lifes and one sleeping cat) by a Japanese-born artist, whose first show in New York coincides with the retrospective at the Metropolitan of works by her husband, Balthus. Through Saturday, March 24. (Matisse, 41 E. 57th St.)

Mark Tansey—Implausible, sometimes very comic, situations painted with sober, grisaille exactitude—for instance, a canvas entitled "Homage to Frank Lloyd Wright" depicts the battle between the Merrimac and the Monitor, correct in every detail except that the Monitor's gun turret is the Guggenheim Museum. Through March 28. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Jeff Way—Masks that the artist has used in various performances; the cast of characters includes demons, sorcerers, and heads that reflect the influence of Picasso. Through March 31. (Pam Adler, 37 W. 57th St.)

Manoucher Yektai—Fresh-looking new works—still-lifes, figures, landscapes—blocked in with a palette knife and touched up with brushes. Through March 31. (Alex Rosenberg, 20 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Robert S. Zakanitch—Large decorative paintings in most of which full-blown flowers stand out against a seemingly unrelated background. Through Saturday, March 24. (Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Modern Expressionists—Up-to-date paintings by twenty-two American, Italian, and German artists, Louisa Chase, Eric Fischl, Anselm Kiefer, and Sandro Chia among them. Through April 7. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Dina Gustin Baker—New paintings. Through Saturday, March 24. (Ingber, 460 West Broadway.)

Arnold Bittleman—Figurative drawings in various mediums. Through April 11. (Milliken, 98 Prince St.)

Phyllis Bramson / Frederic Amat—Paintings. / Representational compositions in mixed mediums on paper. Through April 4. (Knowlton, 153 Mercer St.)

Cora Cohen—A series of nonobjective paintings whose colorful surfaces have small glossy patches that look wet. Through Saturday, March 24. (Hutchinson, 138 Greene St.)

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Porfirio Di Donna / R. L. Kaplan—A ten-year survey of paintings that are typified by orderly and colorful processions of dots up and down or across the canvas. / Eight new large-scale oils depicting dogs and other four-footed friends (a park bench, horses) in an urban setting. Through March 31. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Terry Fox—Posterlike art works in which examples of soporific diplomatic guff copied from the media are contrasted with the shorthand abstractions of political graffiti—antinuke symbols, for instance. Through Saturday, March 17. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Lori Goodman / Tom Rankin—Paintings of large, primitive-looking figures, sometimes in pairs, sometimes amorous, and sometimes embattled. / Sculptural pieces carved of wood and accented with leather, ivory, ebony, and the like. Through Saturday, March 17. (Manhattan Art, 81 Greene St.)

Peter Grass—New paintings, once again on themes emblematic of outer space. Through March 31. (Serra di Felice, 295 Lafayette St., corner of Houston St.)

Harmony Hammond—Five representative sculptures. Through March 31. (A.I.R., 63 Crosby St.)

Willy Heeks and Steve Lindsay—Two abstract painters, the former artist concentrating on solid forms and the latter on loosely applied ribbons of paint. Through Saturday, March 17. (Protetch McNeil, 214 Lafayette St., between Spring and Broome Sts. Opens at noon.)

Dennis Kardon—Blue cutout drawings of cowboys, on white paper, and paintings of high-tech health-spa interiors. Through Saturday, March 24. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Barbara Kruger—Conceptual photographic works, combining found photographs and text. Through April 14. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Mario Merz—An igloo made of big slabs of beeswax surmounted by a stuffed antelope head, plus other constructions involving wax, and several large paintings by this Italian artist. Through Saturday, March 24. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

John Miller—Thirty-five small, earnestly realist paintings and countless drawings on just about every subject imaginable—courtroom scenes, undersea life, Ku Kluxers, concerts, landscapes, shoe stores. Through Saturday, March 24. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Frank Roth—Abstract paintings that spring from the artist's contemplation of the effects of time and weather on everything around him. Through Saturday, March 24. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Edward Ruscha—New paintings; in addition, one by Nancy Reese of a square-rigger under full sail over which Mr. Ruscha has printed the words "Brave Men Run in My Family." Through March 31. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)

Kenny Scharf—Two shows. Outsize spray-can paintings of wildly imaginative creatures and objects, some of which have the character of Cracker Jack prizes. Through Saturday, March 24. (Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St.) . . . ¶ Additional paintings. Through Sunday, March 18. (Fun, 254 E. 10th St. Tuesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Alan Shields—Fanciful constructions, some like kites and some like festive banners, made of cloth saturated with bright paint and stretched on light frames. Through Saturday, March 17. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

The Drawing Center, 137 Greene St.—Works by a group of ten artists, including Jill Moser, who uses graphite on Mylar, and Randall Dahlgren, whose emblematic drawings are in black, white, and primary colors. Through Saturday, March 24. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Gilles Jean Giuntini—Sculptured boat shapes in wood—sometimes covered with sheet lead, sometimes given a charred finish—set on tables also made by the artist. Through Saturday, March 24. (Bouckaert, 100 Hudson St.)

Michael Hurson—Sofas, eyeglasses, chairs, architectural columns, and fellow-artists are the subjects of these colorful drawings, in which vestiges of many modern styles may be discerned. Through March 25. (The Clocktower, 108 Leonard St., five blocks south of Canal St., at Broadway. Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Philip Reisman—Paintings of New York from the past fifty years, by a social realist. Through March 29. (Ryan, 452 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 7; Saturdays, noon to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

James Surls—The Delahunty gallery is showing large, fanciful sculptures in wood (some of them incorporating tree trunks) by this artist, in two locations: 291 Church St., two blocks below Canal St., and 112 Greene St. Both shows through April 14.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Berenice Abbott and Lewis W. Hine (1874-1940)—Fifty prints by each, documenting urban life. Through April 7. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

David Bailey—Eighty large-scale prints featuring celebrities from the sixties. Through April 8. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Blythe Bohnen / Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904)—Self-portraits done using three- and four-second exposures. / Selections from his series of animal locomotion studies. Through April 14. (Light, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Victor Burgin—Photographs, with text, that pick up the narrative of Hitchcock's "Vertigo" at the point of Kim Novak's exit and go on to explore the story of Ophelia. Through Saturday, March 24. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

James Casebere—Photographs of constructions the artist made, the constructions themselves, and photo light boxes. Through April 4. (Brown, 100 Greene St.)

George Hoyningen-Huené (1900-68)—Portraits of Josephine Baker, Igor Stravinsky, Johnny Weissmuller, and others. Through April 7. (Staley-Wise, 177 Prince St. Opens at noon.)

Mark Klett—Contemporary prints of the Southwest which follow the tradition of such nineteenth-century photographers as Watkins, O'Sullivan, and Jackson. Some are in color. Through Saturday, March 17. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Joseph Nechvatal—Photographs. Through March 31. (Nature Morte, 204 E. 10th St. Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6:30.)

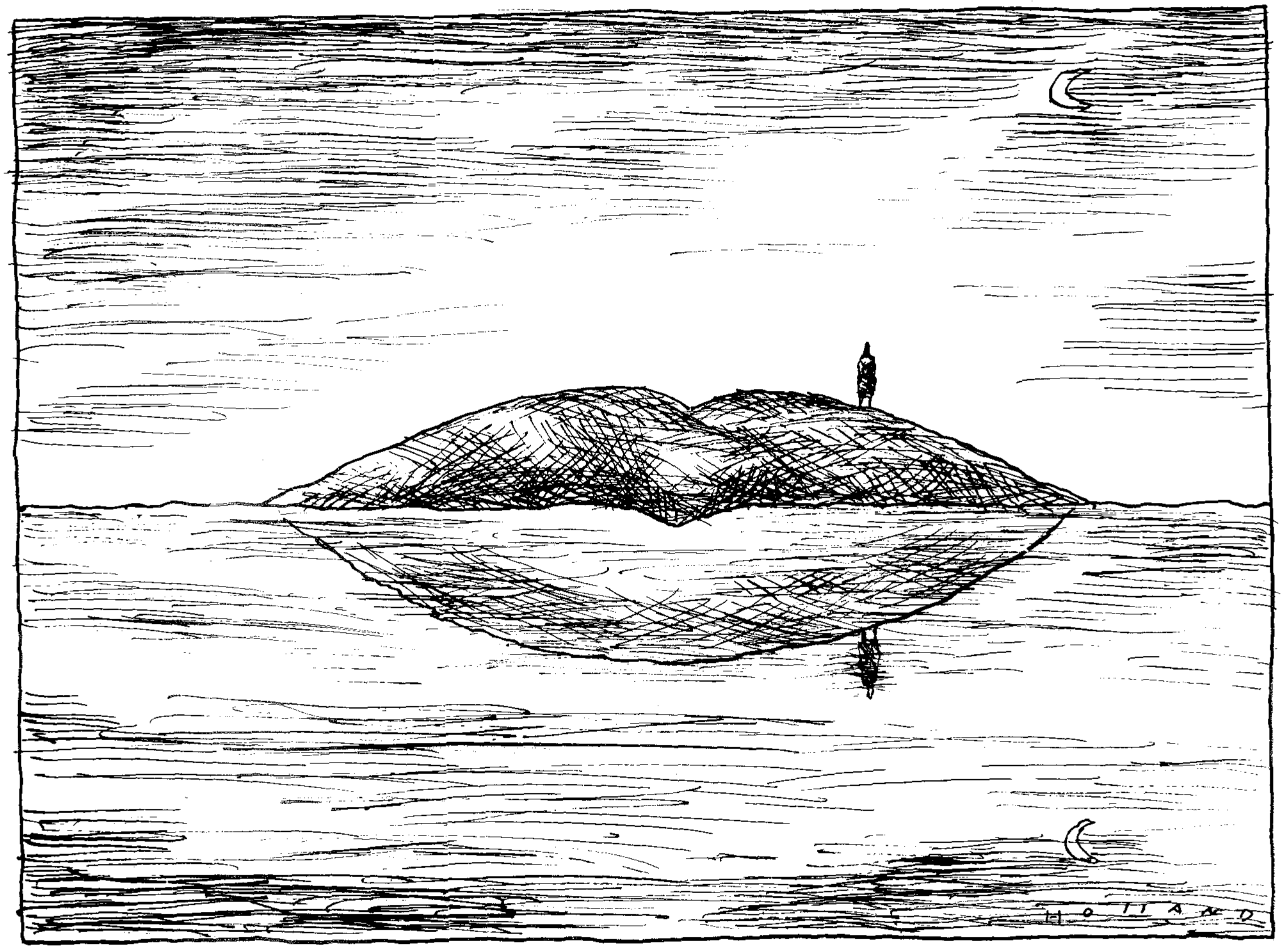
Arnold Newman—Abstractions from 1939 to the present by a photographer known primarily for his portraits. Through March 31. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Charles Pratt (1926-76)—Black-and-white and color prints of nature in locations ranging from New England to Ireland to Greece. Through Saturday, March 24. (Sander, 51 Greene St.)

Eiichi Sakurai / George A. Tice—Soft-focus land-

ERIN
H. Martin

THE REPORTER WHO WOULDN'T REPORT



INSIDE STORY: WITH HODDING CARTER ON PBS. FRIDAY, MARCH 23, AT 9 P.M.*

Should journalists make every detail public when their private lives are involved in the news?

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

scapes. / Photographs of Lincoln icons, including two in Newark—a courthouse statue and a neon sign that reads "Lincoln Motel/Abe's Disco." Through April 7. (Witkin, 41 E. 57th St. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

William Wegman—Photographs (primarily Polaroids), plus twenty drawings. Through Saturday, March 24. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Group Shows—Prints by ten artists, among them Sherrie Levine, Bernard Faucon, and Eve Sonneman. Through Saturday, March 24. (Visual Arts Museum, 209 E. 23rd St. Mondays through Thursdays, noon to 9; Fridays, 11 to 4:30; Saturdays, 9 to 4.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A retrospective of paintings and drawings by the French artist Balthus which was recently on exhibit at the Beaubourg. Through May 13. . . . ¶ Forty-one seventeenth-century Dutch portraits, still-lifes, landscapes, and genre and marine paintings on loan from the Royal Picture Gallery, Mauritshuis. By Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals, van Ruisdael, and a number of their esteemed colleagues. Through April 15. . . . ¶ A selection of fifty of Leonardo da Vinci's anatomical drawings from the Royal Library at Windsor Castle is being shown in conjunction with an exhibit of sixty anatomical Renaissance prints. Both through April 15. . . . ¶ A retrospective of paintings and works on paper by Impressionist William Merritt Chase (1849-1916). Through June 3. . . . ¶ A retrospective of paintings (watercolors, chiefly) by American landscape artist Charles Burchfield. Through March 25. . . . ¶ The Costume Institute's twelfth annual revel is devoted to the designs of Yves Saint Laurent. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8:45; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 4:45; Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Museum of Modern Art—The museum will be closed for renovations until May.

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Picasso: A selection of about two hundred works from the last decade of his career, divided almost equally among paintings, drawings, and graphics. Through May 6. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A show charting the history of the flower genre in American paintings and drawings, not the least example of which is the six-canvas series "Jack-in-the-Pulpit," by Georgia O'Keeffe. Among the other artists represented are Audubon, Maria Oakey Dewing, John La Farge, Charles Demuth, and Lee Krasner. Through May 20. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—The Malcolm Morley retrospective contains fifty paintings. Through April 15. P.S.: The route to the Morley show, which is on the fifth floor, *has its own rewards: newly refurbished galleries* for the museum's collection of American paintings, where Yvonne Jacquette's "East River View with Brooklyn Bridge" (1983) is prominently displayed. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, Broadway at 155th St.—An exhibit of works by thirty-two painters and sculptors who are candidates for six Academy-Institute awards. Robert Arneson, Elizabeth Murray, Neil Welliver, others. Through April 1. (Open daily, except Mondays, 1 to 4.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—A display of photographs of Tibet by nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western travellers to the region, who were explorers, scientists, or missionaries rather than professional artists. Through May 27. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A show of etchings by the Tiepolos, father and sons. Through April 22. . . . ¶ An exhibit of embroidered samplers which emphasizes the broad geographical scope of the craft (there are examples from North Africa, Sri Lanka, China, Europe, America, and Mexico) and illustrates the European antecedents of American samplers. Through May 27. . . . ¶ A loan exhibition of more than three hundred netsuke, generally small carved figures, which were formerly used by Japanese men to anchor small pouches to their obis and are now collected as decorative objects. Through April 8. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

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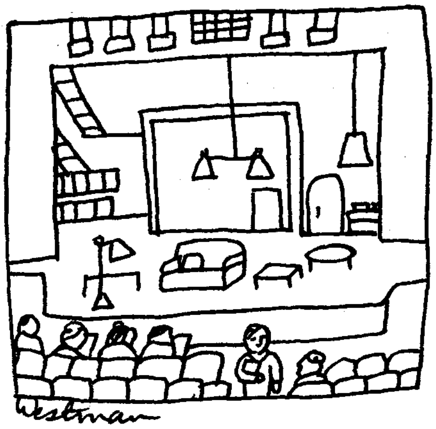
Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A hundred items (books, manuscripts, prints, and objects) that have played a significant part in the hundred-year history of exhibitions at this institution, which opened in May of 1884 with a show of modern etchings. Through March 31. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The British Library has provided forty-nine examples of manuscript painting by Renaissance artists, including Jean Fouquet, who is represented by a leaf from a Book of Hours commissioned by his patron Etienne Chevalier. Through April 29. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—This year's annual juried show offers more than two hundred paintings, sculptures, and graphics, by both member artists (Gregorio Prestopino, Richard McDermott Miller) and nonmember artists (Carolyn Harris, Cornelis Ruthenberg). Through April 5. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

Note—*Several exhibitions have been mounted* for the bicentennial of the establishment of trade and cultural relations between the United States and China. At the **AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,** Central Park W. at 79th St.: Luxury trade items, such as silk and other textiles, jade, lacquerware, furniture. This show was organized by the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. Through May 12. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.) . . . **MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK,** Fifth Ave. at 104th St.: Chinese Export porcelain made specifically for New York customers, among them Alexander Hamilton and John Jay. Through Sept. 5. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.) . . . **NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY,** 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.: Objects of art, including porcelain, silver, and lacquerware. Numerous punch bowls from the late eighteenth century. Through Aug. 26. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)



EXPERIMENTAL OUTPOSTS

(Various avant-garde enterprises that may involve not only traditional art but music, video, dance, and so on.)

Artists Space, 105 Hudson St., at Franklin St. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6.—Thirteen paintings by Sally Hazelet Drummond dating from 1971 to the present. . . . ¶ Another show here has photographs by Larry Johnson and paintings by Annette Lemieux and Jolie Stahl. Both through Saturday, March 24.

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.—Phyllis Bulkin (performance), Thursday, March 15, at 8:30. . . . ¶ An installation of sculptural books (with text) by Gülşen Çalik. Through April 14.

The Kitchen, 59 Wooster St. 925-3615. Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 6.—Komar & Melamid in what The Kitchen calls a "painting-in-performance," Friday, March 16, at 8:30; Arthur Russell and David Linton (music), Monday, March 19, at 8:30. . . . ¶ A three-channel video installation by Tony Oursler. Through March 31.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7459; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., 570-3949; for Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410; and for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday evening, March 14: "Arabella," with Kay Griffel, Mignon Dunn, David Rendall, and Franz Ferdinand Nentwig; conducted by Marek Janowski. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, March 15: "La Forza del Destino," with Leontyne Price, Isola Jones, Giuseppe Giacomini, and Leo Nucci; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday evening, March 16: "Die Entführung aus dem Serail," with Catherine Malfitano, Judith Blegen, Francisco Araiza, and Philip Creech; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, March 17: "Arabella," with Kay Griffel, Mignon Dunn, David Rendall, and Franz Ferdinand Nentwig; Marek Janowski. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, March 17: "Francesca da Rimini," with Renata Scotto, Placido Domingo, Cornell MacNeil, and Richard Fredricks; James Levine. . . . ¶ Monday evening, March 19: "Manon Lescaut," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Vasile Moldoveanu, Allan Monk, and Italo Tajo; Nello Santi. . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, March 20: "La Forza del Destino," with Leontyne Price, Isola Jones, Giuseppe Giacomini, and Leo Nucci; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, March 21: "Die Entführung aus dem Serail," with Catherine Malfitano, Judith Blegen, Francisco Araiza, and Philip Creech; Julius Rudel. . . . ¶ Thursday evening March 22: "Francesca da Rimini," with Renata Scotto, Placido Domingo, Cornell MacNeil, and Vernon Hartman; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday evening, March 23: "Manon Lescaut," with Teresa Zylis-Gara, Vasile Moldoveanu, Allan Monk, and Italo Tajo; Nello Santi. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, March 24: "La Forza del Destino," with Leontyne Price, Isola Jones, Giuseppe Giacomini, and Leo Nucci; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, March 24: "Die Entführung aus dem Serail," *with Catherine* Malfitano, Judith Blegen, Francisco Araiza, and Philip Creech; Julius Rudel. (Evenings at 8. Matinées at 2.)

Chamber Opera Theatre of New York—The first three of six performances of Benjamin Britten's "Curlew River," with Andrea Velis, tenor. Staged by Thaddeus Motyka and conducted by John Evans. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. Wednesdays, March 14 and 21, and Thursday, March 22, at 8. *For tickets, call* 570-1888.)

Amato Opera Company—Mascagni's "Cavalleria

Rusticana" and Leoncavallo's "Pagliacci." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturday, March 17, at 7:30, and Sunday, March 18, at 2:30.)

"La Traviata"—The Goldovsky Opera Theatre's production of Verdi's opera. (Lehman College Concert Hall, the Bronx. 960-8833. Sunday, March 18, at 3.)

Golden Fleece Ltd.—Presenting three works by American composers: The New York première of "The Diet," a one-act opera with music by Elmer Olenick and a libretto by Carl Gersuny and Mr. Olenick; the première of "The Dragonfly Partita," a suite of songs for soprano, with music by Lou Rodgers set to poems by Robert Gresh; and "The Cask of Amontillado," a one-act opera with music by Russell Currie and a libretto by Carl Laanes. (TOMI, 23 W. 73rd St. Thursday and Friday, March 22-23, at 8; Saturday, March 24, at 3 and 8; and Sunday, March 25, at 3 and 7. For information about tickets, call 691-6105.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall—Semyon Bychkov conducting a Rachmaninoff-Dvořák program on Thursday, March 15, at 8; Friday, March 16, at 2; and Saturday, March 17, and Tuesday, March 20, at 8 (all with Rudolf Firkusny, piano). . . . ¶ Leonard Bernstein conducting a Copland-Schumann-Stravinsky program Thursday through Saturday, March 22-24, and Tuesday, March 27, at 8 *(no soloists)*.

Czech Philharmonic Orchestra—Jiri Belohlavek conducting, with Jorge Bolet, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 14, at 8.)

Houston Symphony—At Carnegie Hall, Sergiu Comissiona conducting—Thursday, March 15, at 8: With André-Michel Schub, piano. . . . ¶ Friday, March 16, at 8: With Maurice André, trumpet.

Orchestre National de France—Lorin Maazel conducting. **CARNEGIE HALL:** Monday, March 19, at 8, a Dukas-Prokofieff-Rachmaninoff program, with Horacio Gutiérrez, piano. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 20, at 8, a Rachmaninoff-Prokofieff-Ravel program, with Mr. Gutiérrez. . . . **AVERY FISHER HALL:** Wednesday, March 21, at 8, a Debussy-Ravel-Stravinsky program, with Bruno Leonardo Gelber, piano.

Swedish Chamber Orchestra—Ulf Björlin conducting, with Inger Wikström, piano, and vocal soloists. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, March 20, at 8.)

New Orleans Philharmonic—Philippe Entremont conducting, with Yefim Bronfman, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 21, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducting—The third in a "Meet the Moderns" series of four concerts, this one a tribute to Duke Ellington, with the East 13th Street Band, the Mercer Ellington Band, the Radio Choir of the Institutional Church of Brooklyn, and vocal and instrumental soloists. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Thursday, March 15, at 8. . . . Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, March 16, at 8. For information about tickets call 254-6374.) . . . ¶ An all-Mozart program, with Eugene Fodor, violin, and the New York Choral Society. (Brooklyn Academy of Music. Friday and Saturday, March 23-24, at 8, and Sunday, March 25, at 2.)

Manhattan Philharmonia—Michael Pratt conducting. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St. Friday, March 16, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Y Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz conducting. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Saturday, March 17, at 8, and Sunday, March 18, at 3, with Janos Starker, cello; Alessandra Marc, soprano; and John Cheek, bass. . . . ¶ Carnegie Hall. Thursday, March 22, at 8, the first in a series of three all-Beethoven programs, with Alfred Brendel, piano.)

Jupiter Symphony—Jens Nygaard conducting, with Henry Herford, baritone. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, March 21, at 8.)

Opera Orchestra of New York—Eve Queler directing a performance of Donizetti's "Dom Sébastien, Roi de Portugal" in concert form, with Klara Takács, soprano; Richard Leech, tenor; and Lajos Miller and Darren Nim-

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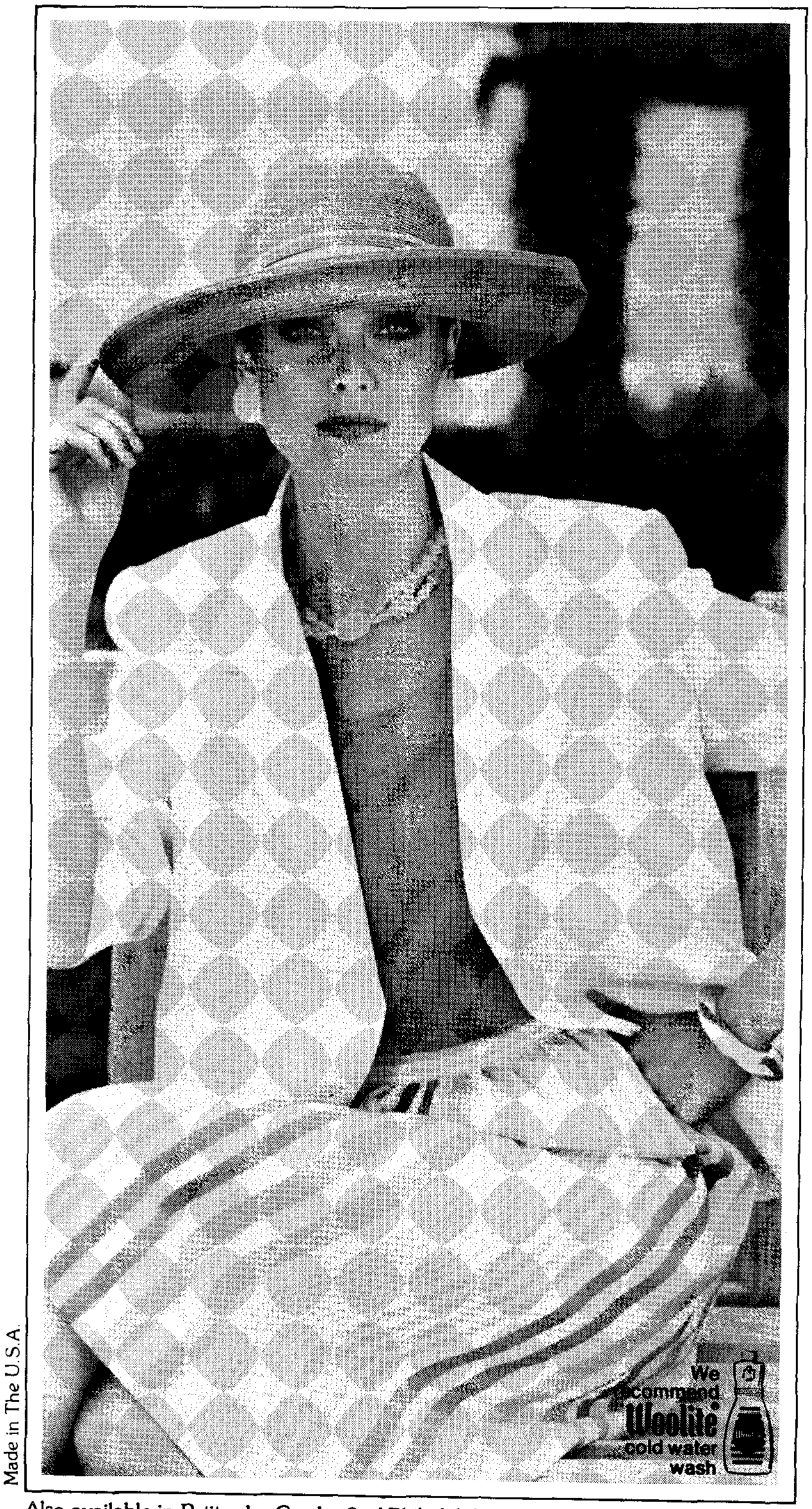

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

nicht, baritones; and the Schola Cantorum of New York. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, March 23, at 8.)

Orpheus—With Menahem Pressler, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 24, at 8.)

Musica Aeterna Orchestra—Frederic Waldman conducting, with Ivan Moravec, piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Saturday, March 24, at 8, and Sunday, March 25, at 6.)

Ensemble for Early Music—A program of Italian canzoni and polychoral sonatas and German lieder and dances. With the New York Consort of Viols, the New York Cornet and Sacbut Ensemble, the Gleemen, and the Court Dance Company of New York. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 24, at 8.)

New Amsterdam Singers—Clara Longstreth directing. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Sunday, March 18, at 8.)

Musica Sacra—Richard Westenburg directing the chorus and orchestra in a performance of Handel's oratorio "Solomon," with Kathleen Battle, soprano; James Bowman, countertenor; Carroll Freeman, tenor; and John Cheek, bass. (Avery Fisher Hall. Monday, March 19, at 7:30.)

Pomerium Musices—Alexander Blachly directing an all-Bach program, with Colin Tilney, harpsichord. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Monday, March 19, at 8.)

RECITALS

Martina Arroyo—*Soprano, in a benefit concert,* with the Hunter Symphony conducted by Clayton Westermann. (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. 570-5736. Wednesday, March 14, at 7.)

Music Today—Gerard Schwarz conducting a chamber ensemble, with David Shifrin, clarinet; John van Buskirk, piano; and David Gordon, tenor. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Wednesday, March 14, at 8.)

Radu Lupu—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, March 15, at 8.)

Charles Treger and André Watts—Violin and piano, performing two programs of Beethoven sonatas. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Thursday, March 15, and Thursday, March 22, at 8.)

Anita Sheer and Laurie Randolph—Flamenco guitarist/vocalist and classical guitarist. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Thursday, March 15, at 8.)

League-ISCM—The third in this season's series of five programs, this one performed by Robert Shannon, piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, March 15, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—An all-Beethoven program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Friday, March 16, at 8.)

Maplewood Baroque Ensemble—Performing music of the period on original instruments. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Friday, March 16, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Maurizio Pollini—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, March 17, at 8.)

Robert Mann and Yefim Bronfman—Violin and piano, in an all-Mozart program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Saturday, March 17, at 8.)

Stephanie Brown—Piano. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, March 17, at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

George Foca-Rodi—*Piano, in an all-Chopin* program. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 17, at 8.)

New Winds—A program that will include the première of Kirk Nurock's "Sendings," for five winds, four guinea pigs, and a Siberian husky. (Metropolitan-Duane United Methodist Church, Seventh Ave. at 13th St. Saturday, March 17, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Beaux Arts Trio—Chamber music. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 636-4100. Saturday, March 17, at 8:30, and Sunday, March 18, at 2.)

Muir String Quartet—Chamber music. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Sunday, March 18, at 2. For information about tickets, call 741-5689.)

Pinchas Zukerman—Violin, with Marc Neikrug, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, March 18, at 3.)

Tokyo String Quartet—With Leonard Rose, cello. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 18, at 3.)

Phoenix—An early-music group, presenting vocal and instrumental music from England. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. Sunday, March 18, at 4. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Susan Belling—Soprano, in a program of Jewish music. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Sunday, March 18, at 5.)

Alexis Weissenberg—Piano, in an all-Chopin program. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, March 18, at 8.)

David Burge—Piano, in a program of contemporary music. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, March 18, at 8.)

Heinz Holliger—Oboe, in the first of two concerts, this one with the American Quartet. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Sunday, March 18, at 8.)

Hiroko Ohki—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Monday, March 19, at 8.)

American Brass Quintet—A program called "*Festive Brass Music from the Renaissance* and Baroque." (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Monday, March 19, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Music from Indiana University—A program of works by Brahms, Bartók, Verdi, and others, performed by sixteen vocal and instrumental soloists and two chamber ensembles. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, March 20, at 8.)

Chamber Music at the Y—An all-Bach program, with Jaime Laredo, violin; Sharon Robinson, cello; *Eugenia Zukerman, flute; and Anthony* Newman, harpsichord. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 20-21, at 8.)

Aulos Ensemble—With Jaap Schröder, baroque violin. (St. Joseph's Church, 371 Sixth Ave. Tuesday, March 20, at 8. For tickets, call 663-7565.)

Group for Contemporary Music—A program of music for string instruments. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Tuesday, March 20, at 8.)

Benita Valente and Cynthia Raim—Soprano and piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Thursday, March 22, at 8.)

Carlos Barbosa-Lima—Classical guitarist. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, March 22, at 8.)

John van Buskirk—Fortepiano, with assisting artists. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, March 22, at 8.)

Andrea Von Ramm and Hopkinson Smith—Mezzo-soprano and lute. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Friday, March 23, at 8.)

Paul Shipper and Wendy Young—Recorder and harpsichord. (St. Michael's Church Recital Hall, 225 W. 99th St. Friday, March 23, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

National Chorale Soloists—Martin Josman directing an ensemble of singers and musicians in the second in a series of four concerts, this one an all-Bach program. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Friday, March 23, at 8. For tickets, call 869-0970.)

Pamela Frame—Cello. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum. Saturday, March 24, at 2:30.)

Grant Johannesen—Piano, in an all-Beethoven program. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, March 24, at 3.)

Michala Petri, David Petri, and Hanne Petri—Recorder, cello, and harpsichord. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y. Saturday, March 24, at 8.)

Yale Chamber Music Series—The last in a series of concerts, this one with Ronald Roseman, composer-oboist; Gregory Charnon, vibraphone and marimba; Jesse Levine, viola; and others. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House. Saturday, March 24, at 8.)

Beethoven Chamber Series—*The last in a series* of concerts, this one performed by Tashi and

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others. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Saturday, March 24, at 8.)

MISCELLANY

Wall-to-Wall Charles Ives—A free twelve-hour marathon, with, among others, Jan DeGaetani, mezzo-soprano; Paul Sperry, tenor; Gilbert Kalish, piano; Dennis Russell Davies, pianist-conductor; the New Amsterdam Singers; and the American Composers Orchestra. The audience will be invited to participate in certain selections. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Saturday, March 17, from 11 to 11. Beginning at 10:30 A.M., a marching band will parade up Broadway from 79th Street to Symphony Space.)

Benefit Concert—Frank Sinatra, Luciano Pavarotti, Montserrat Caballé, Diana Ross, Buddy Rich and his orchestra, and members of the New York Philharmonic conducted by John Williams. The beneficiary is the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Sunday, March 18, at 8:15.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:** Knicks vs. Cleveland, Thursday, March 15, at 8. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Kansas City, Saturday, March 17, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Boston, Thursday, March 22, at 8. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Washington, Saturday, March 24, at 7:35. . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA** (1-201 935-8888): Nets vs. Phoenix, Wednesday, March 14, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Milwaukee, Wednesday, March 21, at 7:35.

Boxing—Golden Gloves New York City finals. Sponsored by the News Charities. (Madison Square Garden. Friday, March 23, at 7:30.)

Gymnastics—McDonald's American Cup Gymnastics Championships. (Madison Square Garden. Saturday, March 17, at noon, and Sunday, March 18, at 2.)

Hockey—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:** Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Wednesday, March 14, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Boston Bruins, Tuesday, March 20, at 7:35. . . . **NASSAU COLISEUM:** Islanders vs. Washington Capitals, Saturday, March 17, at 7:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Devils, Tuesday, March 20, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Minnesota North Stars, Saturday, March 24, at 7:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 1-516 794-9100.) . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA** (1-201 935-3900): Devils vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Monday, March 19, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Rangers, Thursday, March 22, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Buffalo Sabres, Saturday, March 24, at 1:35.

Racing—At Aqueduct: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 1, and Sundays at 1:05. The Bay Shore, Saturday, March 17; the Ruthless, Sunday, March 18; and the Distaff Handicap, Saturday, March 24.

Trotting—At **YONKERS RACEWAY:** Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, March 31. . . . **MEADOWLANDS:** Weeknights at 8; through Saturday, Aug. 18.

ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—James Purdy reading from his own novels. (Three Lives & Company, 154 W. 10th St. Thursday, March 15, at 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Hayden Carruth and Susan Mitchell reading from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, March 19, at 8.) . . . ¶ Madeline DeFrees, Carolyn Kizer, William Matthews, and David Wagoner reading from the poetry of Richard Hugo. (Guggenheim Museum Auditorium, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. Tuesday, March 20, at 7. No tickets necessary.)

Auctions—At **SOTHEBY'S,** York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:30 to 5; Sunday, March 18, from 1 to 5.) Thursday, March 15, at 10:15 and 2: Chinese snuff bottles. . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, March 16-17, at 10:15 and 2: Chinese works of art, including paintings and furniture. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 22, at 10:15: Old Master paintings. Exhibition starts Saturday, March 17. . . . **CHRISTIE'S,** Park Ave. at 59th St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.) Thursday, March 15, at 10 and 2: American and European prints. . . . ¶ Wednesday and Thursday, March 21-22, at 10 and 2: Japanese works of art. Exhibition starts Saturday, March 17.

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ARIZONA. Dramatic scenery in Bryce Canyon, Zion, Grand Canyon, mystic Canyon de Chelly. Monument Valley by four-wheel drive. 8 days. **$749.**

COLORADO ROCKIES. Estes Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, Trail Ridge Road, Vail, Aspen, train from Silverton to Durango, Mesa Verde, Royal Gorge, Colorado Springs, cog-rail ascent of Pikes Peak. 8 days. **$768.**

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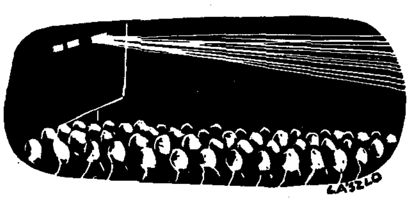

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 26.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
"Germany, Pale Mother" (1980; directed by Helma Sanders-Brahms; in German), with Eva Mattes.

R.K.O. Century Art, 36 E. 8th. (473-7014)
"El Norte" (†).

St. Marks Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 8th. (533-9292)
Through March 15: "Yentl" (†); and "Romantic Comedy" (Arthur Hiller), with Dudley Moore and Mary Steenburgen.
March 16-22: "Star 80" (†) and "Local Hero" (†).
From March 23: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Splash" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through March 22: "Mike's Murder" (James Bridges), with Debra Winger.
From March 23: "Police Academy" (Hugh Wilson), with Steve Guttenberg and Kim Cattrall.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Blame It on Rio" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Footloose" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Broadway Danny Rose" (†). From March 16: "Tank" (Marvin J. Chomsky), with James Garner.
Theatre 3: "Against All Odds" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through March 22: "Terms of Endearment" (†).
From March 23: "Racing with the Moon" (Richard Benjamin), with Sean Penn and Elizabeth McGovern.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through March 15: "Reuben, Reuben" (Robert Ellis Miller), with Tom Conti.
From March 16: "The Ice Pirates" (Stewart Raffill), with Robert Urich and Mary Crosby.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Unfaithfully Yours" (Howard Zieff), with Dudley Moore and Nastassja Kinski.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Blame It on Rio" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"A Woman in Flames" (Robert Van Ackeren; in German), with Gudrun Landgrebe.

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: March 14: "The Right Stuff" (†). March 15-22: "A Generation Apart" (Jack Fisher), a documentary; and "The Well" (David Greenwald; a short film, in Yiddish). From March 23: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Tender Mercies" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through March 22: "Silkwood" (†). From March 23: "Terms of Endearment" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 22: "Terms of Endearment" (†). From March 23: "Racing with the Moon" (Richard Benjamin), with Sean Penn and Elizabeth McGovern.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"The Trouble with Harry" (1955; Alfred Hitchcock), with Edmund Gwenn, John Forsythe and Shirley MacLaine.

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: Through March 22: "And the Ship Sails On" (†). From March 23: "Le Bal" (Ettore Scola).
Theatre 2: "The Dresser" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Over the Brooklyn Bridge" (Menahem Golan), with Elliott Gould and Margaux Hemingway. From March 16: "Tank" (Marvin J. Chomsky), with James Garner.
Theatre 2: "Mike's Murder" (James Bridges), with Debra Winger.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Broadway Danny Rose" (†).

Loews New York Twin I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Harry & Son" (Paul Newman), with Newman and Robby Benson. From March 16: "Footloose" (†).
Theatre 2: "This Is Spinal Tap" (Rob Reiner), with Reiner and Christopher Guest.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Night of the Shooting Stars" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The Hotel New Hampshire" (Tony Richardson), with Jodie Foster and Beau Bridges.

72nd Street East, 1st Ave. at 72nd. (288-9304)
Through March 15: "El Norte" (†).
From March 16: "The Big Chill" (†).

U. A. 85th St. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Splash" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Against All Odds" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Footloose" (†). From March 16: "Children of the Corn" (Fritz Kiersch), with Peter Horton and Linda Hamilton.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Through March 15: "Killpoint" (Frank Harris), with Leo Fong and Richard Roundtree.
From March 16: "Tank" (Marvin J. Chomsky), with James Garner.

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through March 22: "Mike's Murder" (James Bridges), with Debra Winger. From March 23: "Police Academy" (Hugh Wilson), with Steve Guttenberg and Kim Cattrall.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Over the Brooklyn Bridge" (Menahem Golan), with Elliott Gould and Margaux Hemingway. From March 16: "The Ice Pirates" (Stewart Raffill), with Robert Urich and Mary Crosby.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through March 20: "The World of Tomorrow" (directed by Tom Johnson and Lance Bird), a documentary on the 1939 New York World's Fair. From March 21: "The Secret Agent" (1983; Jacki Ochs) and "SL-1" (1983; Diane Orr and C. Larry Roberts), both documentaries.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "The Lost Weekend" (1945; Billy Wilder), with Ray Milland, Jane Wyman, and Howard Da Silva; and "The Big Clock" (1948; John Farrow), with Ray Milland, Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Sullivan, and Elsa Lanchester. March 16-17: "Flame Top" (1980; Pirjo Honkasalo and Pekka Lehto; in Finnish); and "The Pirates" (1983; Morten Kolstad; in Norwegian). March 18-19: "New York, New York" (†) and "Stormy Weather" (†). March 20: "Nanook of the North" (†) and "Man of Aran" (†). March 21-22: "The Brothers Rico" (1957; Phil Karlson), with Richard Conte and Dianne Foster; and "99 River Street" (1953; Phil Karlson), with John Payne and Evelyn Keyes. March 23-24: "The House" (1983; Egill Edvardsson; in Icelandic); and "Rubber Tarzan" (1981; Soren, Kragh-Jacobsen; in Danish).

Vandam, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498; theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"The Compleat Beatles" (Patrick Montgomery), a documentary.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Liquid Sky" (Slava Tsukerman).
Theatre 2: "Android" (Aaron Lipstadt), with Klaus Kinski.

Greenwich Playhouse 1 and 2, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "This Is Spinal Tap" (Rob Reiner), with Reiner and Christopher Guest.
Theatre 2: Through March 22: "Over the Brooklyn Bridge" (Menahem Golan), with Elliott Gould and Margaux Hemingway. From March 23: "Champions" (John Irvin), with John Hurt.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Dresser" (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 22: "The Dresser" (†). From March 23: "The Trouble with Harry" (1955; Alfred Hitchcock), with Edmund Gwenn, John Forsythe, and Shirley MacLaine.
Theatre 3: "Broadway Danny Rose" (†).
Theatre 4: Through March 22: "Broadway Danny Rose" (†). From March 23: "Reuben, Reuben" (Robert Ellis Miller), with Tom Conti.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Jazzman" (Karen Shakhnarazov; in Russian).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through March 15: "Fantasia" (†).
From March 16: "A Star Is Born" (1954 †).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
Through March 20: "Educating Rita" (†).
From March 21: "Musical Passage" (Jim Brown), a documentary about Lazar Gosman.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"This Is Spinal Tap" (Rob Reiner), with Reiner and Christopher Guest.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"Confidentially Yours" (François Truffaut; in French), with Fanny Ardant and Jean-Louis Trintignant.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Le Crabe Tambour" (1977; Pierre Schoendoerffer; in French), with Jean Rochefort.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Terms of Endearment" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "That Sinking Feeling" (Bill Forsyth).
Theatre 2: "Basileus Quartet" (†).
Theatre 3: Through March 22: "Demons in the Garden" (Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón; in Spanish), with Angela Molina. From March 23: "L'Argent" (Robert Bresson; in French).

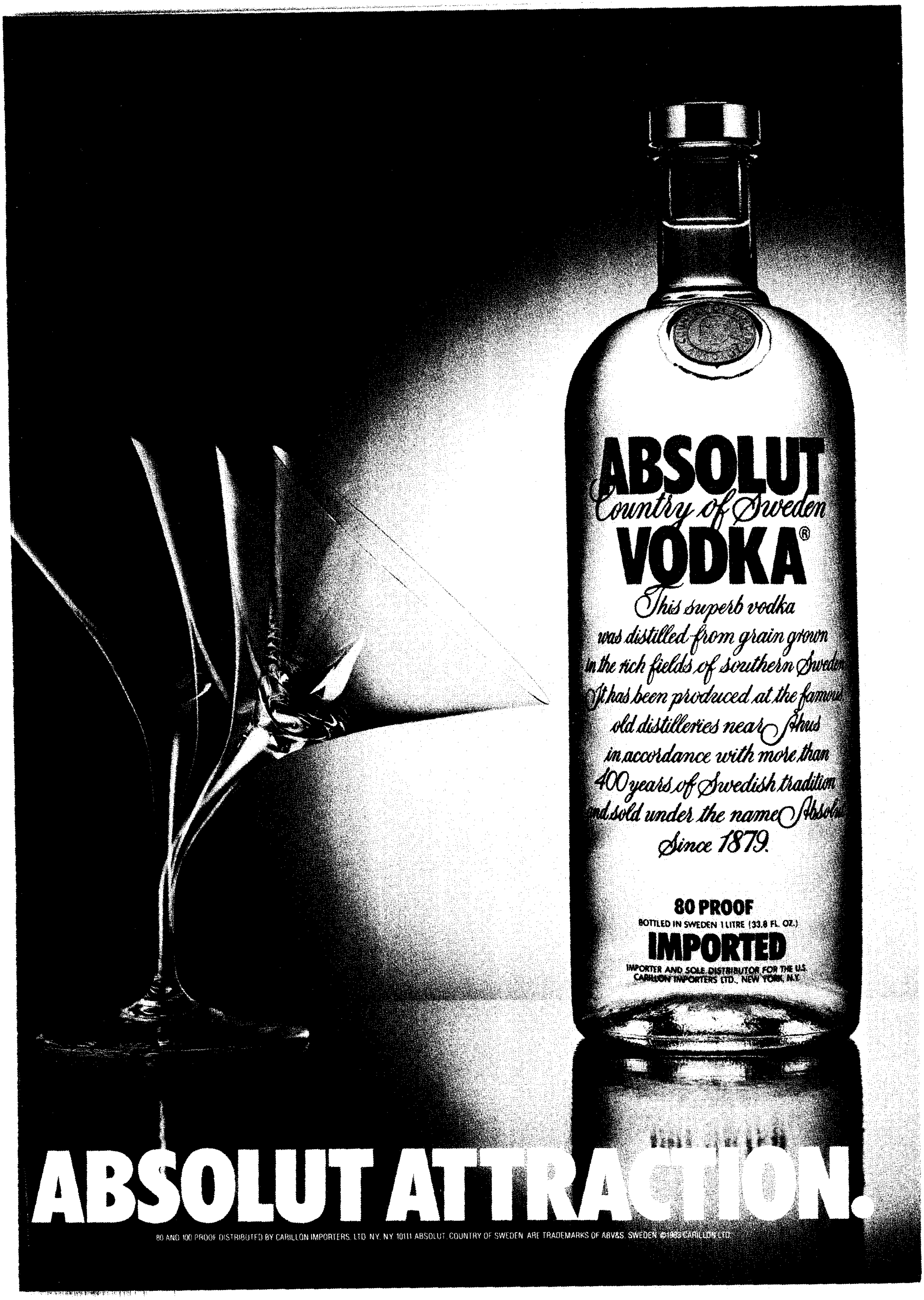
Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Entre Nous" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Trouble with Harry" (1955; Alfred Hitchcock), with Edmund Gwenn, John Forsythe, and Shirley MacLaine.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Carmen" (Carlos Saura; in Spanish), *with Antonio Gades.*
Theatre 2: "The Dresser" (†).

Loews 83rd Quad, B'way at 83rd. (877-3190)
Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Harry & Son" (Paul Newman), with Newman and Robby Benson. From March 16: "Tank" (Marvin J. Chomsky), with James Garner.
Theatre 2: "Against All Odds" (†).
Theatre 3: "Mike's Murder" (James Bridges), with Debra Winger.
Theatre 4: "The Right Stuff" (†).

New Yorker 1 and 2, B'way at 88th. (580-7900)
Theatre 1: "Seeing Red: Stories of American Communists" (Julia Reichert and James Klein), a documentary.
Theatre 2: "Broadway Danny Rose" (†).

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through March 22: "El Norte" (†). From March 23: "Reuben, Reuben" (Robert Ellis Miller), with Tom Conti.
Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Gorky Park"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What should you look for in personal

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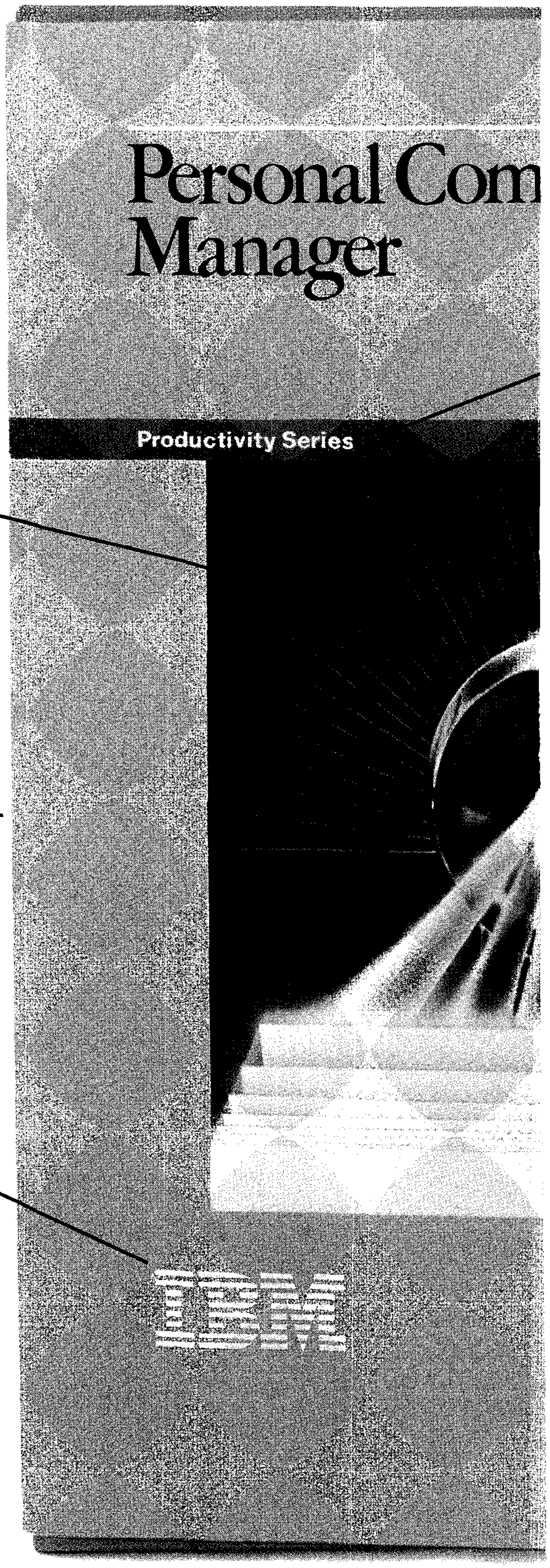

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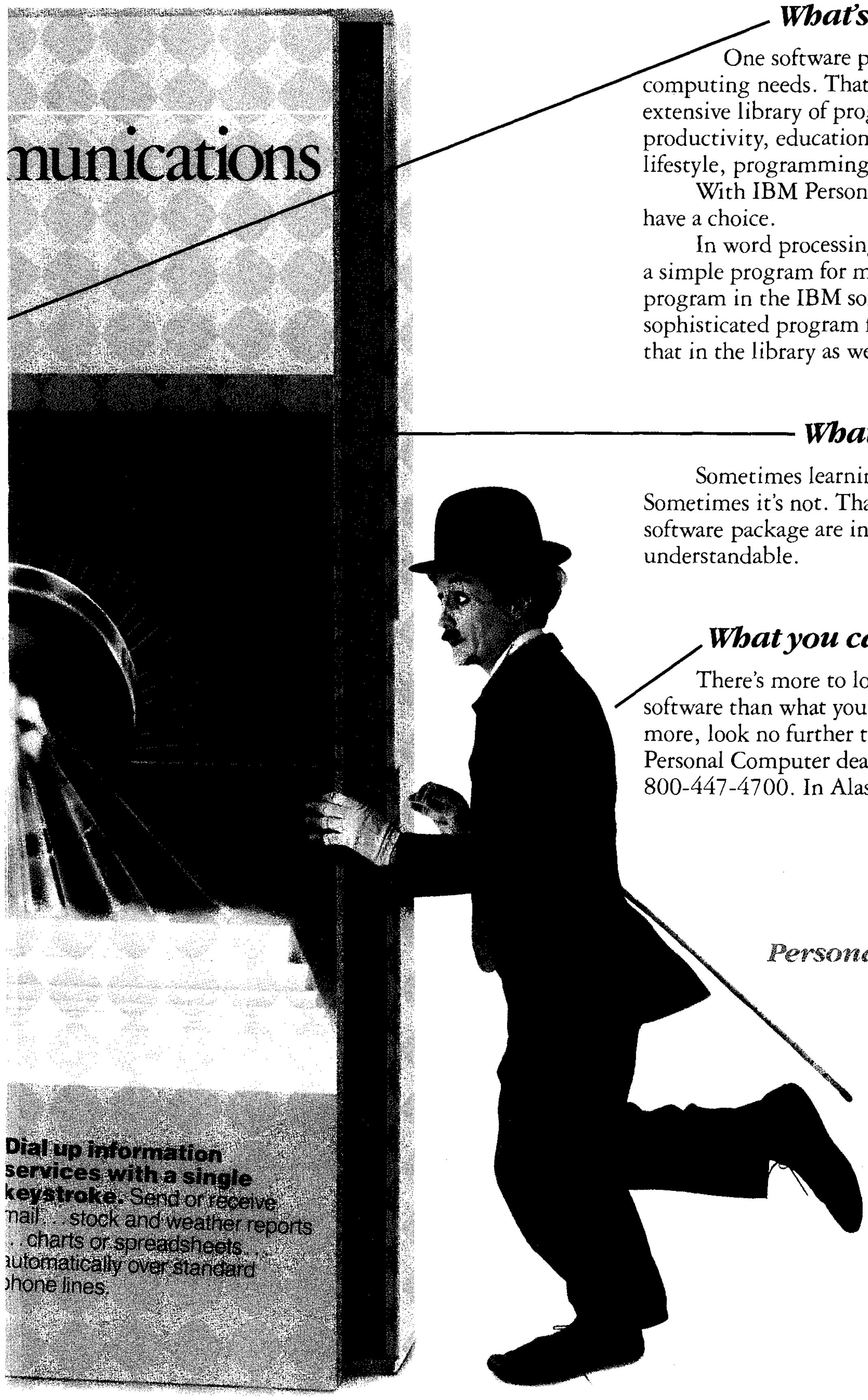
computer software?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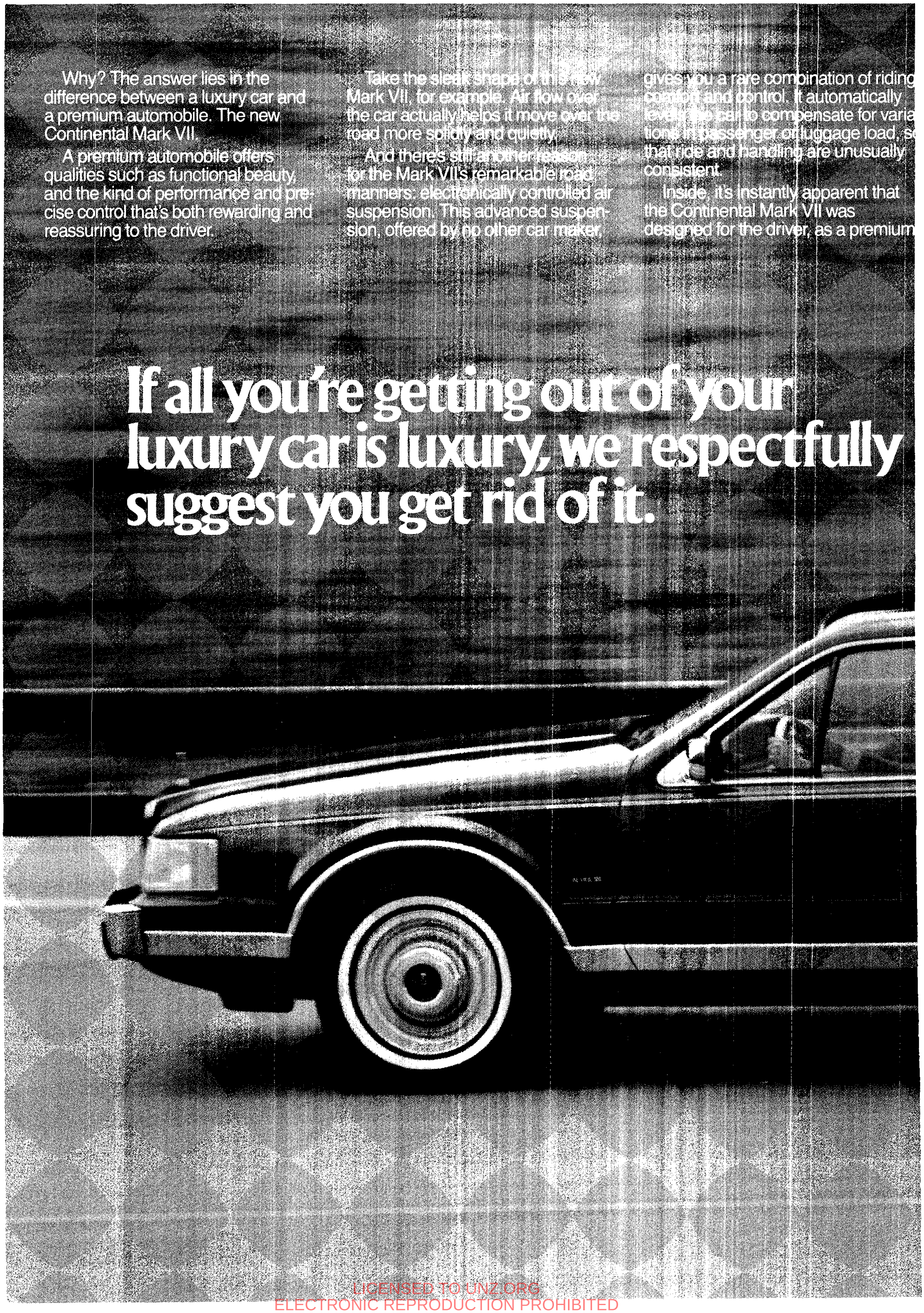

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*[illegible] survey of owner-reported problems during [illegible] months of ownership of 1983 luxury cars.

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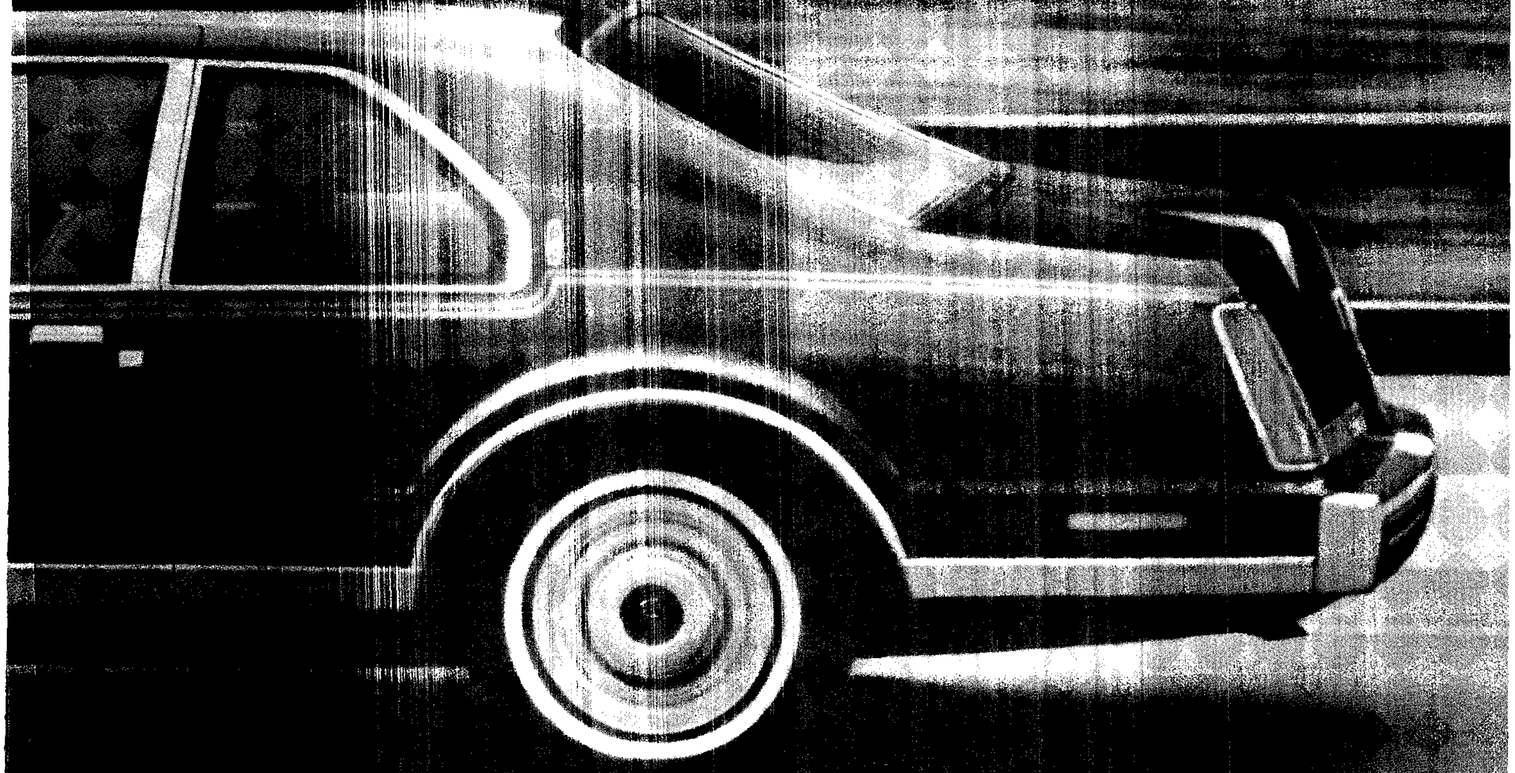

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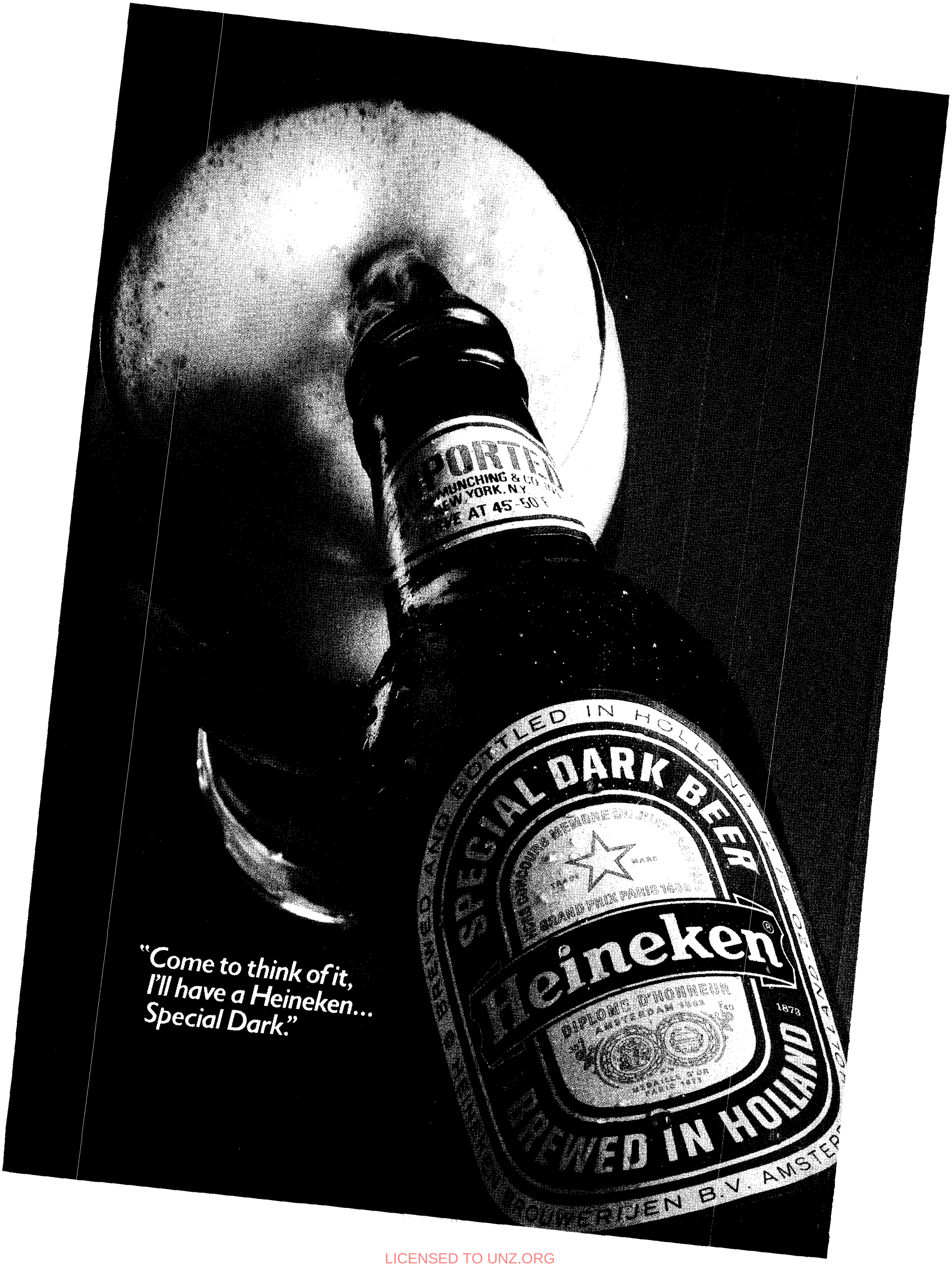
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

(Michael Apted), with William Hurt and Lee Marvin; and "Under Fire" (†). From March 16: "Children of the Corn" (Fritz Kiersch), with Peter Horton and Linda Hamilton.

Theatre 3: Through March 15: "Nostalghia" (Andrei Tarkovsky; in Italian), with Erland Josephson; and "Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears" (1981; Vladimir Menshov; in Russian). From March 16: "A Woman in Flames" (Robert Van Ackeren; in German), with Gudren Landgrebe.

Theatre 4: "Splash" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Mike's Murder" (directed by James Bridges), with Debra Winger.

Theatre 2: "Blame It on Rio" (†).

Theatre 3: "Sudden Impact" (†).

Theatre 4: Through March 15: "Over the Brooklyn Bridge" (Menahem Golan), with Elliott Gould and Margaux Hemingway. From March 16: "Lassiter" (Roger Young), with Tom Selleck and Jane Seymour.

Theatre 5: Through March 15: "Forced Entry." From March 16: "Scarface" (†).

Theatre 6: "The Right Stuff" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)

"The Ten Commandments" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: Through March 15: "Angel" (Robert Vincent O'Neil), with Cliff Gorman and Susan Tyrrell. From March 16: "Footloose" (†).

Theatre 3: "Never Cry Wolf" (†).

Theatre 4: "The Big Chill" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)

"The Hotel New Hampshire" (Tony Richardson), with Jodie Foster and Beau Bridges.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (582-5060)

Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Footloose" (†). From March 16: "Children of the Corn" (Fritz Kiersch), with Peter Horton and Linda Hamilton.

Theatre 2: "Against All Odds" (†).

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)

"The Smurfs and the Magic Flute."

Rivoli 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1633)

Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Harry & Son" (Paul Newman), with Newman and Robby Benson. From March 16: "Tank" (Marvin J. Chomsky), with James Garner.

Theatre 2: Through March 22: "Killpoint" (Frank Harris), with Leo Fong and Richard Roundtree. From March 23: "Alley Cat."

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Silkwood" (†).

Theatre 2: "Splash" (†).

R.K.O. Century Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)

Theatre 1: Through March 15: "Scarface" (†). From March 16: "The Ice Pirates" (Stewart Raffill), with Robert Urich and Mary Crosby.

Theatre 2: Through March 22: "Unfaithfully Yours" (Howard Zieff), with Dudley Moore and Nastassja Kinski. From March 23: "Police Academy" (Hugh Wilson), with Steve Guttenberg and Kim Cattrall.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Agee Room, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560; on Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

To be announced.

Bleecker St. Cinema, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560; on Mondays through Thursdays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

To be announced.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)

To be announced.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through March 15: "Repulsion" (1965; directed by Roman Polanski), with Catherine Deneuve, Ian Hendry, Yvonne Furneaux, and John Fraser; and "The Tenant" (1976; Roman Polanski), with Polanski.

March 16-17: "Meetings with Remarkable Men" (1979; Peter Brook), with Terence Stamp and Warren Mitchell; and "Blood Wedding" (1981; Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Antonio Gades.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24

March 18-20: "Animal Crackers" (†); "Duck Soup" (1933; Leo McCarey), with the Marx Brothers; and "Horse Feathers" (†).

March 21-22: "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" (1941; Alfred Hitchcock), with Carole Lombard, Robert Montgomery, and Gene Raymond; and "Suspicion" (1941; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant and Joan Fontaine.

March 23-24: "An Officer and a Gentleman" (1982; Taylor Hackford), with Richard Gere, Debra Winger, and Louis Gossett, Jr.; and "Urban Cowboy" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Through March 15: "To Be or Not to Be" (1983; Alan Johnson), with Mel Brooks and Anne Bancroft.

From March 16: To be announced.

Hollywood Twin Cinema 1, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)

March 14: "The Ritz" (1976; Richard Lester), with Jack Weston, Rita Moreno, and Jerry Stiller; and "Staircase" (1969; Stanley Donen), with Richard Burton and Rex Harrison.

March 15-17: "Dr. No" (1963; Terence Young) and "From Russia with Love" (1964; Terence Young), both with Sean Connery as James Bond.

March 18-19: "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" (1968; Sergio Leone) and "A Fistful of Dollars" (1967; Sergio Leone), both films with Clint Eastwood.

March 20-21: "Body Heat" (1981; Lawrence Kasdan), with William Hurt, Kathleen Turner, and Richard Crenna; and "Eyewitness" (†).

March 22-24: "Goldfinger" (†) and "Thunderball" (†).

Hollywood Twin Cinema 2, 8th Ave. at 47th. (246-0717)

Through March 15: "Gregory's Girl" (1982; Bill Forsyth), with Gordon John Sinclair; and "Don's Party" (1982; Bruce Beresford; an Australian film), with John Hargreaves.

March 16-17: "King of Comedy" (1983; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro and Jerry Lewis; and "Diner" (1982; Barry Levinson), with Daniel Stern, Steve Guttenberg, and Mickey Rourke.

March 18: "Anna Karenina" (1935; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Fredric March, and Basil Rathbone; "Grand Hotel" (1932; Edmund Goulding), with Greta Garbo, John Barrymore, Joan Crawford, and Wallace Beery; and "Camille" (1937 †).

March 19-20: "The Last Waltz" (1978; Martin Scorsese), with the Band; and "Don't Look Back" (1967; Donn Pennebaker), with Bob Dylan.

March 21-22: "The Star Chamber" (1983; Peter Hyams), with Michael Douglas; and "The Verdict" (†).

March 23-24: "The Dead Zone" (1983; David Cronenberg), with Christopher Walken and Brooke Adams; and "Brainstorm" (1983; Douglas Trumbull), with Christopher Walken, Natalie Wood, Louise Fletcher, and Cliff Robertson.

Metro Cinema, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

March 14: "Get Out Your Handkerchiefs" (1978; Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Patrick Dewaere, Carole Laure, Michel Serrault, and Riton; and "Beau Père" (1981; Bertrand Blier; in French), with Patrick Dewaere and Ariel Besse.

March 15: "The Grey Fox" (1983; Phillip Borsos), with Richard Farnsworth; and "Barbarosa" (1982; Fred Schepisi), with Willie Nelson and Gary Busey.

March 16: "King of Hearts" (1967; Philippe de Broca; in French and English), with Alan Bates and Geneviève Bujold; and "Zazie" (1960; Louis Malle; in French), with Catherine Demongeot and Philippe Noiret.

March 17: "Passion" (1983; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Isabelle Huppert and Hanna Schygulla; and "Contempt" (1964; Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Brigitte Bardot, Jack Palance, Fritz Lang, and Michel Piccoli.

March 18: "Perceval" (1978; Eric Rohmer; in French); and "Lancelot of the Lake" (†).

March 19: "I Married a Shadow" (1983; Robin Davis; in French), with Nathalie Baye and Francis Huster; and "The Bride Wore Black" (†).

March 20: "The Three Crowns of the Sailor" (1984; Raoul Ruiz; in French); and "Hideout" (1984; Jean-Pierre Denis; in French). Mr. Denis will be present at 6.

March 21: "The Black Sheep" (1984; Patrick Chaput; in French); and "The Story of Adrien" (1984; Jean-Pierre Denis; in French). Mr. Denis will be present at 6:10 and Mr. Chaput will be present at 8:30.

March 22: "The Dust of the Empire" (1984; Lâm-Lê; in French); and "Detective Story" (1984; Jacques Bral; in French).

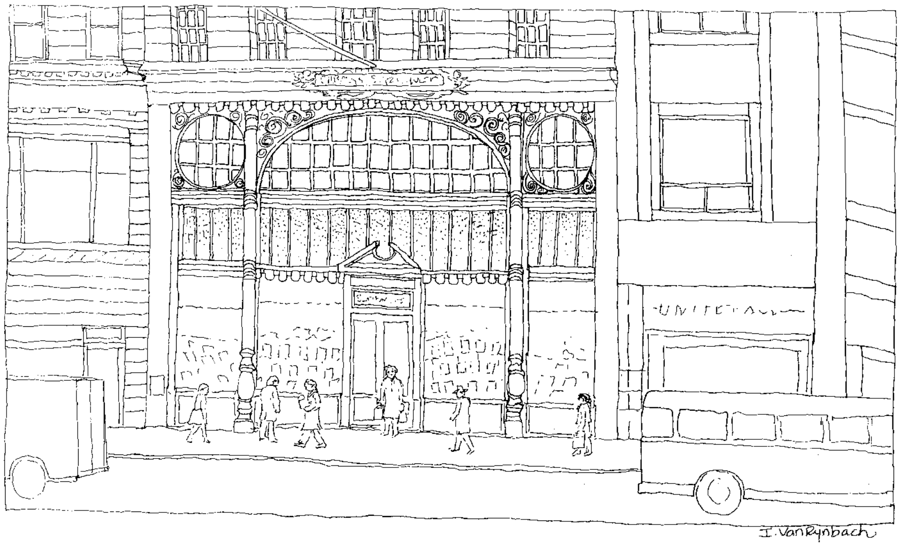
March 23: "The Destiny of Juliette" (1984; Aline Issermann; in French); and "The Trail" (1984; Bernard Favre; in French). Miss Issermann will be present at 8:10.

March 24: "Liberty Belle" (1984; Pascal Kané; in French); and "Clementine Tango" (1984; Caroline Roboh; in French). Mr. Kané will be present at 6 and Miss Roboh will be present at 8:20.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

March 14: "Suez" (1938; Allan Dwan), with Loretta Young, Tyrone Power, and Annabella; and "The Rains Came" (1939; Clarence Brown), with Myrna Loy, Tyrone Power, and George Brent.

March 15-17: "A Little Romance" (1979; George Roy Hill), with Laurence Olivier, Arthur Hill, and Sally Kellerman; and "Summertime" (1955; David Lean), with



Katharine Hepburn, Rossano Brazzi, Isa Miranda, and Darren McGavin.

March 18-19: "South Pacific" (1958; Joshua Logan), with Rossano Brazzi, Mitzi Gaynor, John Kerr, Ray Walston, and Juanita Hall.

March 20-21: "The Passenger" (1975 †); and "Walkabout" (1971; Nicolas Roeg; an Australian film).

March 22-24: "Ninotchka" (†) and "Love in the Afternoon" (†).

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

March 14: "Kagemusha" ("The Shadow Warrior;" 1980; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Tatsuya Nakadai; and two short films by Donald Ritchie.

March 15: "The Trial" (1963; Orson Welles), with Anthony Perkins, Jeanne Moreau, Suzanne Flon, Elsa Martinelli, and Romy Schneider; and "The Castle" (1969; Rudolf Noelte), with Maximilian Schell.

March 16: "Monty Python's The Meaning of Life" (1983; Terry Jones); and "Jabberwocky" (1977; Terry Gilliam), with Michael Palin.

March 17: "A Streetcar Named Desire" (1951; Elia Kazan), with Vivien Leigh, Marlon Brando, Kim Hunter, and Karl Malden; and "Raging Bull" (1980; Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Cathy Moriarty, and Joe Pesci.

March 18: "La Grande Illusion" (1937; Jean Renoir; in French), with Erich von Stroheim, Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, and Marcel Dalio; and "The Golden Coach" (1953; Jean Renoir; in French).

March 19: "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (1919; Robert Wiene; a German silent film), with Conrad Veidt; "Waxworks" (†); and "The Cat and the Canary" (1927; Paul Leni; a silent film), with Laura La Plante and Creighton Hall.

March 20: "Fahrenheit 451" (1966; François Truffaut), with Julie Christie and Oskar Werner; and "Animal Farm" (1954), a British animated cartoon.

March 21: "Zatoichi and the Scoundrels" (1964; Kimiyoshi Yasuda; in Japanese), with Shintaro Katsu; and "Village of Doom" (1983; Noboru Tanaka; in Japanese).

March 22: "Diabolique" (1955; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Simone Signoret, Vera Clouzot, and Paul Meurisse; and "Panique" (1946; Julien Duvivier; in French), with Michel Simon, Viviane Romance, and Paul Bernard.

March 23: "The Seven Year Itch" (1955; Billy Wilder), with Marilyn Monroe, Tom Ewell, Victor Moore, and Evelyn Keyes; and "How to Marry a Millionaire" (1953; Jean Negulesco), with Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable, and Lauren Bacall.

March 24: "Videodrome" (1983; David Cronenberg), with James Woods; "Rabid" (1977; David Cronenberg), with Marilyn Chambers and Fred Moore; and "The Brood" (1979; David Cronenberg), with Oliver Reed and Samantha Eggar.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

March 14: "The Sting" (1973; George Roy Hill), with Paul Newman, Robert Redford, and Robert Shaw; and "The French Connection" (1971; William Friedkin), with Gene Hackman.

March 15: "Strike Up the Band" (1940; Busby Berkeley), with Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland; and "Babes on Broadway" (1941; Busby Berkeley), with Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney, Richard Quine, and Ray McDonald.

March 16: "Fury" (1936; Fritz Lang), with Spencer Tracy, Sylvia Sidney, Edward Ellis, and Walter Brennan; and "Man Hunt" (1941; Fritz Lang), with Joan Bennett, Walter Pidgeon, and George Sanders.

March 17: "The Third Man" (1950; Carol Reed), with Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Trevor Howard; and "The Trial" (1963; Orson Welles), with Anthony Perkins, Jeanne Moreau, Suzanne Flon, Elsa Martinelli, and Romy Schneider.

March 18: "Young and Innocent" ("The Girl Was Young;" 1937; Alfred Hitchcock), with Derrick de Marney, Nova Pilbeam, Basil Rathbone, Percy Marmont, and Mary Clare; and "Murder" (1930; Alfred Hitchcock), with Herbert Marshall and Norah Baring.

March 19: "Testament of Orpheus" (1962; Jean Cocteau; in French); "The Blood of a Poet" (1930; Jean Cocteau; in French); and "Orpheus" (1949; Jean Cocteau; in French), with Jean Marais, Maria Casarès, and François Périer.

March 20: "The Front Page" (1931 †) and "I Cover the Waterfront" (†).

March 21: "Ecstasy" (†) and "Algiers" (†).

March 22: "The Spiders, Part I and II" (1919-20; Fritz Lang; a German silent film); and "The Great Gabbo" (†).

March 23-24: "The 39 Steps" (1935; Alfred Hitchcock), with Madeleine Carroll, Robert Donat, Godfrey Tearle, Peggy Ashcroft, and John Laurie; and "The Lady Vanishes" (1938; Alfred Hitchcock), with Dame May Whitty, Margaret Lockwood, Michael Redgrave, Paul Lukas, and Cecil Parker.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—"Progress (Memory)" (1983-84), a video installation by Margia Kramer. Continuous showings from noon to 6 (Tuesday evenings until 8). Miss Kramer will be present on Thursday, March 15, at 2. Closed Mondays.

Note—The Museum of Modern Art auditorium will be closed for renovations until sometime in May.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Against All Odds—With Rachel Ward, Jeff Bridges, and James Woods; directed by Taylor Hackford. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Orpheum, Loews 83rd Quad, and Loews State.)

Algiers (1938)—An entertaining piece of kitsch, featuring a torrid romance between Charles Boyer and Hedy Lamarr, making her American film début. Directed by John Cromwell, it's a remake of the infinitely superior French film "Pépé le Moko," directed by Julien Duvivier—and so close a remake that many of the original sequences are followed shot by shot. Yet this version is pure Hollywood, sacrificing everything to glamour, and the heavy makeup and the studio lighting make it all seem so artificial that one can get giggly. In the role that Jean Gabin made famous, Boyer (who may have been an even greater actor than Gabin) is reduced to giving so many passionate, hot glances at the inhumanly beautiful Lamarr that he almost becomes a self-caricature. He plays Pépé, the French crook who is safe in the Casbah, where he lives like a lord, but who longs for Paris. And Lamarr, with her slurry German-English, plays a Parisienne visiting Algiers. Sigrid Gurie is the native girl in love with Pépé. Joseph Calleia slinks around corners as the suave detective, and Gene Lockhart is the rotten squealer. With Johnny Downs and Alan Hale. Cinematography by James Wong Howe; adaptation by John Howard Lawson, with additional dialogue by James M. Cain. (A 1948 remake, "Casbah," with Tony Martin as a singing Pépé, tried for—but missed—the heat and glamour.) (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 21.)

And the Ship Sails On—The year is 1914. A luxury liner called the Gloria N. is sailing from Naples, carrying the ashes of a great operatic diva to the waters off the island of her birth, where they are to be dispersed at sea. Also on board are the late star's friends, colleagues, teachers, accompanists, relatives, fans, and lovers, all of whom have been summoned to take part in the ceremony. During the trip, the ship picks up several boatloads of Serbian refugees, whose presence on deck eventually causes the Gloria N. to be attacked and sunk by an Austro-Hungarian warship. The survivors escape in lifeboats, after which Fellini drops all pretense at any form of conventional storytelling and adopts the Pirandellian conceit of a play within a play, leaving his viewers at the end to wonder exactly what it is he wishes them to infer. The movie is rife with symbols and the story line does lend itself to allegorical interpretation and facile critical analysis. But somehow, as always, Fellini's artistry transcends the obvious. In Italian. (12/26/83; under Letter from Rome.) (Cinema I; through March 22.)

Animal Crackers (1930)—The Marx Brothers in their pre-Hollywood period; like "The Cocoanuts," of the year before, it was a Broadway musical comedy, slightly adapted, and filmed in Astoria—and it looks stagy. But the film is too joyous for cavilling. Groucho is the fearless African explorer Captain Spaulding, who deigns to attend a party at Rittenhouse Manor, on Long Island; Margaret Dumont is Mrs. Rittenhouse, and Lillian Roth is her daughter Arabella. Arguably the best line: "Signor Ravelli's first selection will be 'Somewhere My Love Lies Sleeping' with a male chorus." Once again, the writers were George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind; this time the songs (the justly celebrated "Hooray for Captain Spaulding" and "Why Am I So Romantic") were by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby. Directed by Victor Heerman. (Cinema Village; March 18-20.)

Basileus Quartet—This movie about a string quartet turns out to be less interested in music and musicians than in demonstrating the perils of asceticism, but it's fairly pleasing, anyway. The quartet has toured together for thirty years when the first violinist (François Simon) has a fatal heart attack. He is replaced by a twenty-year-old virtuoso (Pierre Malet) with long ringlets, flaring nostrils, and the animal sensuality of a young Nureyev. The life in him is too much of a shock to the three older men, and, with no ill will on his part, he brings them to grief. The writer-director Fabio Carpi is somewhat too measured and solemn in his approach, and the material sags when one of the three (Michel Vitold) deludes himself that the young fiddler is his lover. But the other two—Omero Antonutti and Hector Alterio, both with trim, lordly beards—bring the film force and dignity. With Gabriele Ferzetti and Alain Cuny. In Italian. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/6/84.) (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Big Chill—An amiable, slick comedy that's ostensibly about how the late-sixties campus activists have adjusted to becoming the kind of people they used to insult—but it isn't really political. Directed by Lawrence Kasdan, who wrote the script with Barbara Benedek, it's set in South Carolina, where a group of seven former friends from the University of Michigan gather for the funeral of Alex, the campus radical who brought them together. The friends bury the sixties (which Alex symbolizes) and then dredge them up to talk about during the weekend. The movie may pretend to be about "life," but it's really about being clever (even the title tells you that), and about the fun of ensemble acting. Jeff Goldblum, William Hurt, and Kevin Kline do some of their best work here; Tom Berenger, Glenn Close, Mary Kay Place, and JoBeth Williams do remarkably well with what they've got to work with. And Meg Tilly, who plays Alex's young girlfriend, is an extraordinarily lovely presence. (10/17/83) (Embassy. . . . ¶ 72nd Street East; starting March 16.)

Blame It on Rio—The movie is about a forty-three-year-old father's guilt and confusion because of his affair with his best friend's fifteen-year-old daughter, who is also his own teen-age daughter's best friend. Michael Caine and Joseph Bologna are the fathers who take their daughters (Demi Moore and Michelle Johnson, respectively) for a month's holiday in Rio. On the beach, ogling the bare-breasted women, the fathers see the backs of two beauties, who turn, and their bare-breasted daughters come bobbing over to them, laughing at their discomfort and hugging them. It's as if a Doris Day–Rock Hudson comedy of the early sixties had gone topless. Most of the movie is an attempt to squirm out from under its messy erotic-parental subject. Directed by Stanley Donen from a final script by Larry Gelbart (a revision of Charlie Peters' version), the picture degenerates into a smarmy sitcom. With Valerie Harper. (2/20/84) (Murray Hill, Gotham Cinema, and Criterion Theatres.)

The Bride Wore Black (1968)—Truffaut's film in

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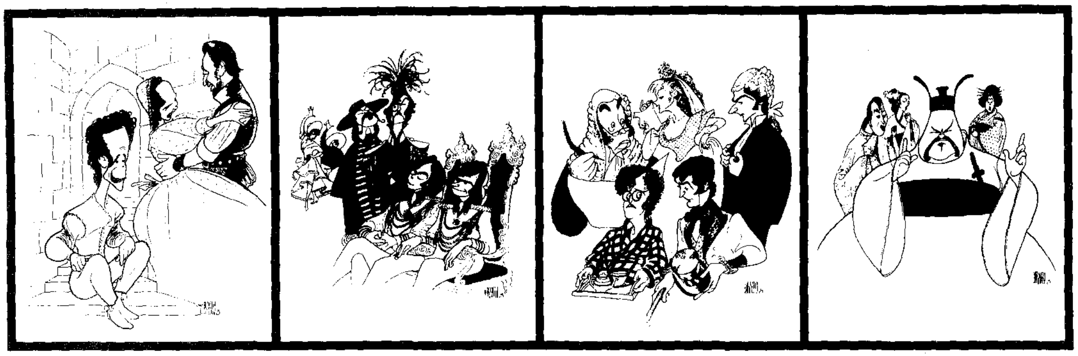

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD

THE GONDOLIERS

TRIAL BY JURY / COX AND BOX

THE MIKADO

HOST: DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS JR.

BEGINNING WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21 8:00PM CHANNEL 13 PBS

THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD, MARCH 21 THE GONDOLIERS, APRIL 11 TRIAL BY JURY/COX AND BOX, MAY 2 THE MIKADO, JUNE 6

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homage to Hitchcock, with Jeanne Moreau as the racked and elegant widow of a bridegroom shot on the steps of the church. Photographed by Raoul Coutard. The hero worship of Hitchcock seems a bit wasteful, for Truffaut is the infinitely greater filmmaker, imbuing even this mechanical story with something finely detailed and lyric about love. In French. (Metro Cinema; March 19.)

Broadway Danny Rose—Danny Rose is a small-time booking agent who nurtures his more promising clients until they're on the brink of stardom, at which point they invariably leave him and sign up with big-time agents. The new Judas in his life is Lou Canova (Nick Apollo Forte), a barrel-chested singer in his forties with a dimply, piggy, Vegas smile and a voice to make musicians shudder. Woody Allen, who plays Danny and who also wrote and directed this Damon Runyonesque movie, has left out the hostility that made him famous, and the imagination and freak lyricism, too. Danny is a Chaplinesque moral presence in a world of Catskills comics and Mafia hoods. The movie is about how Lou Canova's ruthless, tough girlfriend Tina (Mia Farrow, disguised with a nasal accent, fright wig, shades, and some padding) learns to appreciate Danny. Shot in grainy black-and-white, the material is dim and larval, like Danny. The picture has a curdled, Diane Arbus bleakness, but it also has some good fast talk and some push. (2/6/84) (Beekman, Quad Cinema, and New Yorker. . . . ¶ Loews 34th Street Showplace; through March 15.)

Camille (1937)—Like parents crowing over Baby's first steps, M-G-M announced "Garbo talks!" (for "Anna Christie") and "Garbo laughs!" (for "Ninotchka," see below), but they missed out on this one, when they should have crowed "Garbo acts!" Under George Cukor's direction, she gives a warm yet ironic performance that is possibly her finest. Her Camille is too intelligent for her frivolous life, too generous for her circumstances. Actually, Garbo is inconceivable as a whore—her Camille is a divinity trying to succeed as a whore. (No movie has ever presented a more romantic view of a courtesan.) With the exception of Henry Daniell, as Baron de Varville, the rest of the cast does not rise to the occasion. As Armand, Robert Taylor is inept but not completely unforgivable: he had, at least, a romantic profile. As M. Duval, Lionel Barrymore *is* unforgivable. (Both of them are irredeemably American.) The slow, solemn production is luxuriant in its vulgarity; it achieves that glamour which M-G-M traditionally mistook for style. But, in spite of M-G-M, Garbo's artistry triumphs, and the tearjerker "Camille" is transformed into the "classic" the studio claimed it to be. With Lenore Ulric as Olympe, Laura Hope Crews as Prudence, and Elizabeth Allan, Jessie Ralph, Rex O'Malley, and E. E. Clive. From the novel by Alexandre Dumas, adapted by Frances Marion, James Hilton, and Zoë Akins. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; March 18.)

The Dresser—Almost everything in this screen version of Ronald Harwood's 1980 play is good except what relates to its theme: the symbiotic relationship between an old Shakespearean actor-manager (Albert Finney) and his dresser (Tom Courtenay). The material is conceived as a tribute to the flyweight dresser, who cajoles and teases and mothers the old trouper, and keeps him going. In the film's view, great actors are incorrigible, demented children; they need these dedicated nannies hopping about and fussing over them. Courtenay played the dresser on the stage, and his performance is too practiced; it's all dried up. Finney, however, is juicy, with a thundering voice and wonderful false humility. Peter Yates directed, and he provides some fond, light moments. With Lockwood West, Edward Fox, Cathryn Harrison, Eileen Atkins, and Zena Walker. (1/23/84) (Cinema II, Quad Cinema, and Embassy 72nd St.)

Ecstasy (1933)—The once scandalous Czech film, directed by Gustav Machaty, and starring the very young Hedy Lamarr. It was originally intended to be called "Symphony of Love;" along with some explicit sexual sequences, there is symbolic erotic imagery that is romantic, poetic, and, despite its innocent absurdity, sensuous and exciting. The picture was banned and then released and then withdrawn and finally reissued, in so many different versions that everyone who talks about it appears to have seen (or imagined) different sex acts. (In the fifties, there were versions in which someone had decided to prolong the ecstasy by printing the climactic scenes over and over.) Still, whichever "Ecstasy" one sees, it's delicately, tenderly erotic. The theme is Lawrentian, as Henry Miller pointed out in the definitive essay on the film, "Reflections of Ecstasy." In Czech. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 21.)

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Educating Rita—It's no more than a duet "opened up" a bit for the screen, but the lines have surprise and wit. Michael Caine plays a dispirited, burned-out slob of a college professor who tries to conceal his mediocrity by carrying on as if he were Dylan Thomas. Rita, played by Julie Walters, is a street-smart young hairdresser in Liverpool who wants the education that he, with his doctorate and his fancy turns of speech, has decided is worthless. Rita is Julie Walters' role in the way that Billie Dawn in "Born Yesterday" was Judy Holliday's role. The material isn't sustained—Rita, like Billie Dawn, is inevitably less entertaining after she's transformed—but Caine gives a master film actor's performance. Directed by Lewis Gilbert; Willy Russell adapted his own play. (11/14/83) (Festival; through March 20.)

Entre Nous—The French actress-turned-filmmaker Diane Kurys tells the story of two young married women in the nineteen-fifties who don't recognize how unfulfilled they have been in their marriages until they meet each other. The two women (Isabelle Huppert and Miou-Miou) are lighted and posed so that they are two heroic profiles, with taut neck tendons and beautiful chins. Kurys lets us see their self-preoccupation and their unresponsiveness to their children, but this is all pushed to the side; it isn't given any weight. The women are romanticized and politicized as soul mates; they're turned into feminist precursors, while the husbands (Guy Marchand and Jean-Pierre Bacri), who always seem to need a shave, are treated as lumps, as part of the common herd. Kurys tells us that the characters played by Huppert and Marchand are her parents, and Marchand, who plays his role superbly, is the only one a viewer is likely to have any feeling for. But Kurys has made a very peculiar kind of memory film: its psychology goes in one direction; its sexual politics take it in another. And the construction is lackadaisical and flabby. Apparently, we're supposed to think that whether or not the women are lovers is irrelevant to the changes in consciousness they bring out in each other. Yet the picture keeps teetering on the verge of a seduction scene, and that teasing possibility gives many of the scenes their only tension. This is a movie about two women not having a lesbian affair. The only thing that's distinctive about it is its veneer of post-feminism. In French. (3/5/84) (Cinema Studio.)

Eyewitness (1981)—The director Peter Yates and the writer Steve Tesich tried to make a new, more meaningful version of a forties melodrama, but their Manhattan-set thriller bogs down in a tangle of plot. The hero must be a first for a Hollywood hero; he's a janitor in an office building. William Hurt (who plays this janitor) has an entertaining flirtation with Sigourney Weaver, as a TV reporter who comes to film a news item about a murder in the building. In order to pique her interest, he suggests that he may have been an eyewitness, and this fib of his makes the two of them targets for the killers, for the police, and—it begins to seem—for every passerby. Maybe because of the moviemakers' failure to adapt and modernize forties conventions, something berserk happens: Weaver, Irene Worth, and Christopher Plummer, who are all playing Jews, play them like Nazis. They're intense, drawn, haggard, rich, and highly cultured—a stiff and sinister bunch. The movie is punctuated with frequent, inept cuts to a couple of Vietnamese thugs who sneak around eavesdropping, following people, and boding ill. There are good, funny moments, though, with Hurt, with Weaver (before she gets too pinched), with Morgan Freeman and Steven Hill as a cynical, griping team of police lieutenants, with Pamela Reed as the janitor's old girlfriend, and with Kenneth McMillan as the janitor's father. The cast includes James Woods and Albert Paulsen. Cinematography by Matthew F. Leonetti. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; March 20-21.)

Fantasia (1940)—Disney enlisted an odd assortment of collaborators (among them Stokowski, who did it voluntarily, and Stravinsky, who was brought in involuntarily), and this grab bag of ambitious animated shorts—an attempt to combine high art and mass culture—was publicized as if it were an artistic landmark. Disney's animators provided visual interpretations of Bach's "Toccata and Fugue in D Minor" (in Stokowski's transcription, which is a precursor of the musical processing in "2001") and of hyped-up excerpts from "The Nutcracker Suite," "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," "The Rite of Spring," the "Pastoral Symphony," "The Dance of the Hours," and "A Night on Bald Mountain" (which somehow leads into the "Ave Maria"). Volcanoes erupt and dinosaurs battle during "The Rite of Spring;" garlanded girl centaurs cavort during Beethoven's "Pastoral." Initially, the film was a box-office failure, but it proved successful in revivals, especially in the early seventies, when it became a popular head film because of such ingredients as the abstract first section, the mushroom dance during "The Nutcracker Suite" (one of the liveliest sequences), and the overly bright—somewhat psychedelic—color. "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," featuring Mickey Mouse, and parts of other sequences are first-rate Disney, but the total effect is grotesquely kitschy. (Ziegfeld; through March 15.)

Footloose—High-school kids in a mythical Midwestern community that bans rock 'n' roll and dancing—a piece of neo-Andy Hardyism, with plot elements from "Rebel Without a Cause" and dance numbers chopped to pieces in the rock-video manner of "Flashdance." (Footloose is what they're not.) The director, Herbert Ross, and the writer, Dean Pitchford, exhaust one bad idea after another. This will probably be the only rock musical ever made in which every single character is white Protestant. With Kevin Bacon as the new boy in town who challenges the bans and fights for the right of the students to have a senior prom; John Lithgow as the glum Reverend (of the town's only church); Lori Singer as the Reverend's spitfire daughter; Christopher Penn as a sluggish hayseed; and Jim Youngs, Sarah Jessica Parker, and Dianne Wiest. There's an exhilarating title sequence, a good brief scene with a little boy asleep in church, and an entertaining passage in which Bacon teaches Penn to dance. And despite the retrograde material Lori Singer has a startling radiance, and Penn manages to be funny and appealing. Edited by Paul Hirsch. (3/5/84) (Loews 34th Street Showplace. . . . ¶ Loews Orpheum, and Loews State; through March 15. . . . ¶ Loews New York Twin, and Embassy; starting March 16.)

The Front Page (1931)—The first movie version, directed by Lewis Milestone. It stays closer to the Hecht and MacArthur play than the Howard Hawks version of 1940 or the 1974 one by Billy Wilder. The play is a dialogue comedy, but dialogue of the speediest, most rapid-fire variety, which succeeds in this film

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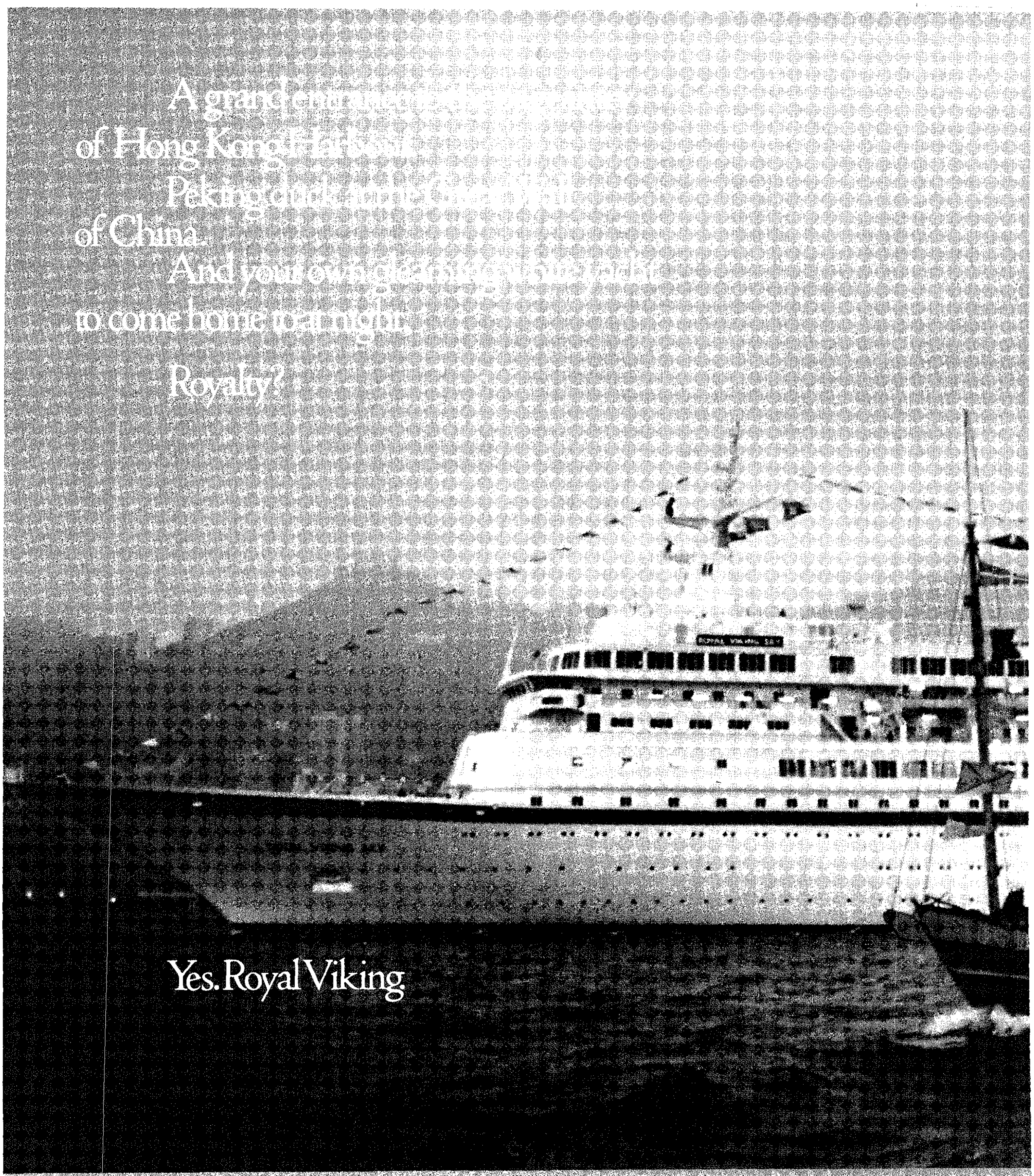

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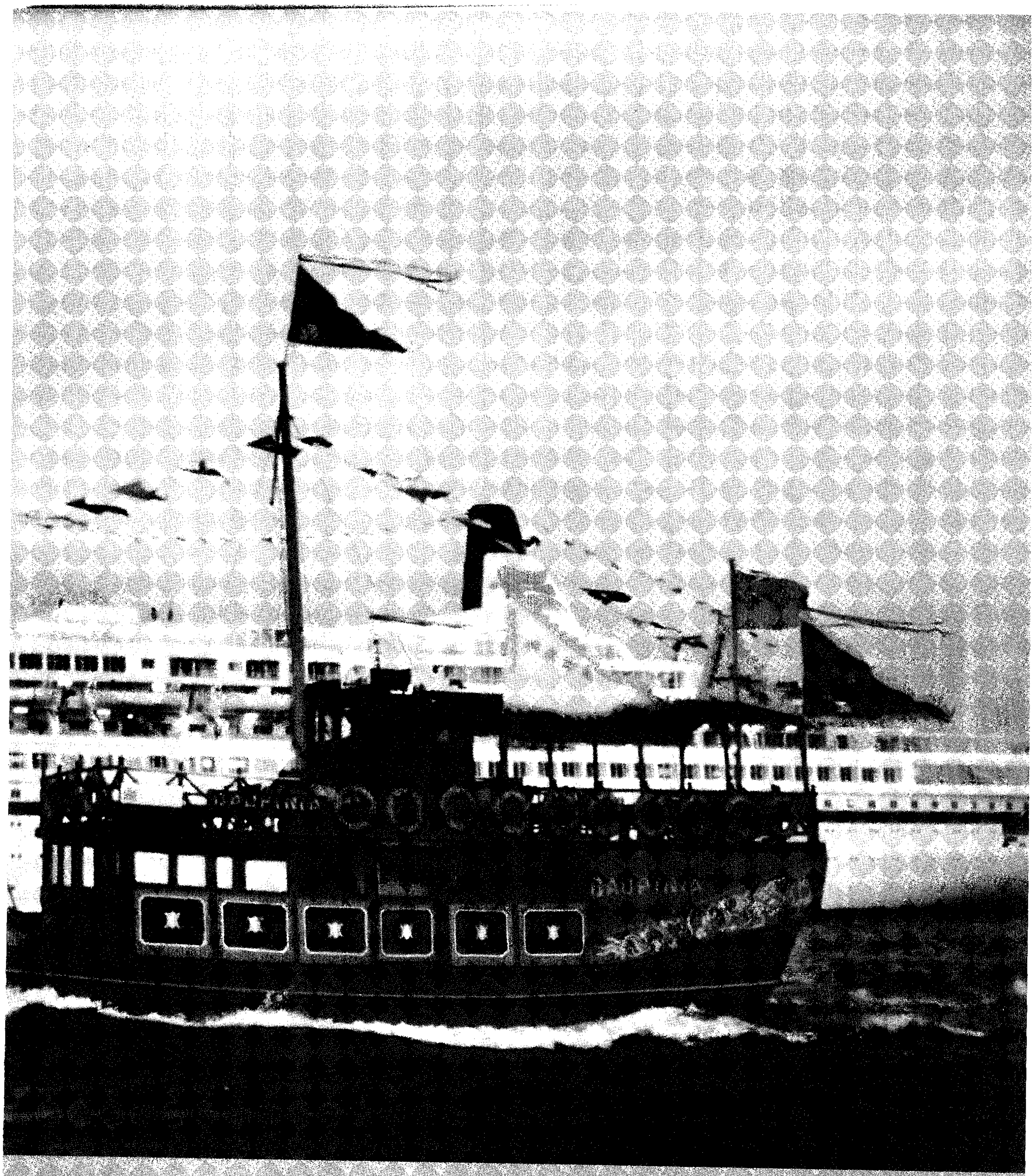

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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as it does on the stage. Adolphe Menjou is sharp and adroit as Walter Burns; Pat O'Brien is a trace too stolid as Hildy Johnson. As the heroine, Mary Brian makes her occasional wan entrances; Edward Everett Horton is the fastidious health-crank reporter. With Mae Clark as the neurotic prostitute, and Walter Catlett. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 20.)

Goldfinger (1964)—The third James Bond thriller, and well up to scratch. Sean Connery, of course, with Gert Frobe as a formidable villain. Directed by Guy Hamilton. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; March 22-24.)

The Great Gabbo (1929)—After the picture he was directing—"Queen Kelly"—was cancelled, Erich von Stroheim turned to acting and had a popular success as a megalomaniac ventriloquist who expresses his sensitive feelings only through his grotesque little dummy, Otto. Directed by James Cruze, from a Ben Hecht story, the film is effective only in a few bits; when the ventriloquist gets into the Follies, his story gets lost between mediocre musical-comedy numbers (which were originally in color). With the talented Betty Compson. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 22.)

Horse Feathers (1932)—The Marx Brothers in one of their niftiest corny-surreal comedies; it isn't in the class of their "Duck Soup," but then what else is? The setting is academic, with emphasis on football; Groucho is Professor Wagstaff, the new president of Huxley College, who explains his policy and plans in the song "Whatever It Is, I'm Against It," and Thelma Todd is the college widow to whom all four Brothers make overtures. So there's some naughty sense to it when Groucho sings the picture's theme song to her, "Everyone Says 'I Love You!' " Norman McLeod directed for Paramount from a screenplay by Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby (who also wrote the songs) and S. J. Perelman and Will B. Johnstone. With Robert Greig as the solemn-voiced biology professor, David Landau as the villain, and Nat Pendleton. (Cinema Village; March 18-20.)

I Cover the Waterfront (1933)—Up front, this is a commonplace romantic melodrama about a wisecracking, hard-drinking reporter (Ben Lyon) who exploits his love affair (with Claudette Colbert) in order to get a good story for his paper, but the background is far from commonplace. Colbert's father (played by Ernest Torrence) is a huge wreck of a sea captain who smuggles Chinese to the West Coast; he's a moody, illiterate mercenary who throws his passengers overboard tied to anchor chains when the Coast Guard approaches. There are several strong, memorable scenes, and such unusual moments as the heroine's passing the time of day with the madam of a brothel while waiting to take her boozed-up father home. James Cruze directed; from Max Miller's book. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; March 20.)

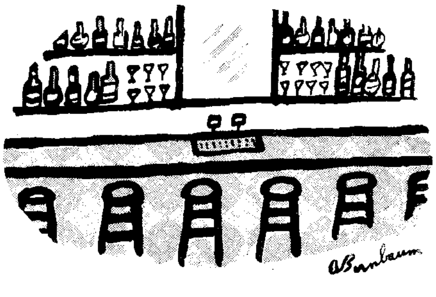
Lancelot of the Lake (1975)—Robert Bresson's dazzlingly severe and beautiful version of the legend of Lancelot, King Arthur, Guinevere, and Arthur's slimy enemy, Mordred. These are the knights after the early enthusiasm over the quest for the Grail has been dampened. The chevaliers quarrel, the Round Table is ringed with chairs that belong to the now dead, and the film ends with a pile of armor in which one remaining figure faintly stirs: we are seeing the fading of chivalry in a heap of scrap metal that amounts to the detritus of a shrivelled code. Yet Bresson's austere art entirely counteracts any feeling of bleakness. In French. (Metro Cinema; March 18.)

Local Hero (1983)—A magical comedy by the Scottish writer-director Bill Forsyth, who observes the people in the movie as if they were one-of-a-kind creatures in a peculiarly haphazard zoo. The story is about an American mergers-and-acquisitions executive—played by Peter Riegert—who is sent to Scotland to buy a fishing village and experiences something new to him: happiness. Denis Lawson—the most relaxed actor of a large, relaxed cast—is Gordon, the village innkeeper, pub owner, accountant, unofficial mayor, and great lover, and he makes each of Gordon's functions funny in a suavely different high style. Burt Lancaster brings an imperial, romantic aura to the role of Riegert's boss—an oil tycoon whose penthouse includes a private planetarium. Also with Peter Capaldi as Danny; Jenny Seagrove as the marine biologist, who seems to live in the water and has a hint of iridescence about her; Fulton MacKay as the hermit; Chris Rozycki as the Russian; and Jennifer Black as Gordon's bride. The score is by Mark Knopfler. (3/21/83) (St. Marks Cinema; March 16-22.)

Love in the Afternoon (1957)—Wide-eyed Audrey Hepburn as the Parisian schoolgirl whom Elisabeth Bergner played in "Ariane." A student of the cello, this Ariane falls in love with an aging American roué ensconced in the Paris Ritz—Gary Cooper, looking as if he knows how unappealing he is in the role. The director, Billy Wilder, and his co-scenarist, I. A. L. Diamond, have made her the daughter of a detective (Maurice Chevalier), who is then hired by Cooper to investigate her. It's all meant to be airy and bubbly, but it's obvious, overextended (two hours plus), and overproduced. It was shot in France, and much of it is location work, but the art director, Alexander Trauner, built the first floor of the Paris Conservatoire in a studio, as well as the second floor of the Ritz full scale, with actual, operating elevators. For the performance of "Tristan and Isolde," Wilder engaged nine hundred and sixty extras in full evening dress. At the end, there's a fine view of a smoking, chugging locomotive in a splendid, vaulted railroad station—and for a moment one wonders if this, too, is a set. (Regency; March 22-24.)

Man of Aran (1934)—Robert Flaherty gave two years of his life to making this film and left the Aran Islands with a truly exalted work—the greatest film tribute to man's struggle against hostile nature. The Atlantic, which sweeps in all the way from America, lashes the cliffs of Aran with an almost malignant ferocity; it is considered the most horrible sea in the world. Only thirty miles from Galway, civilized people live on islands of rock so bare that they must gather seaweed to plant their potatoes in. Perhaps because of the mixture of extreme courage and extreme simplicity in the lives of these people, who act out incidents based on past occurrences, the film achieves a true epic quality—a celebration of heroic traditions. (Film Forum; March 20.)

Nanook of the North (1921)—Robert Flaherty, who began as an explorer and anthropologist, once remarked that in the usual travelogue the filmmaker looks down on and never up to his subject. By looking up, Flaherty created a new genre. He began to record the life of a people with a camera, and then, in editing, to distill the meaning. What Flaherty—a great storyteller—distilled was the heroic beauty in simple everyday experience. Instead of going to a culture with a story, he developed his stories out of what he observed; his films have no human villains, yet they have great drama and a surprising amount of comedy. (Like all great documentarians, he imparts his own spirit to his films.) His feature-length study of the Eskimo Nanook, who lives where nothing grows and who depends on what he can kill, was made in 1920 and 1921. Two years later, while people all over the world were applauding this smiling man in his cold and hostile environment, Flaherty's hero died of starvation. He lives on in this movie in a different way from screen actors of the past: Flaherty closes the distance between Nanook and the audience. Financed by Revillon Frères. Silent. (Film Forum; March 20.)



Never Cry Wolf—Adapted from Farley Mowat's autobiographical book, this Carroll Ballard film is about a young biologist (Charles Martin Smith) working for the Canadian government, who is sent to spend a year in the sub-Arctic North. His mission is to find a way to get rid of the wolves that have supposedly been devastating the caribou herds, but he learns that men, rather than wolves, are the predators. Visually (and aurally, too), the film is magnificent. It needed a more stirring script and a central actor with more range (and some depth). But there's a lot of free-floating transcendence, and though it doesn't serve the prosaic story, it certainly holds you. Everything that Ballard (working with Hiro Narita as the cinematographer) shoots seems new, and it has a distinctive, shimmering purity. (12/12/83) (Embassy.)

New York, New York (1977)—An honest failure. This United Artists big-budget musical film, directed by Martin Scorsese, suffers from too many conflicting intentions. Scorsese works within the artifices of forties movie-musical romances and stylizes the sets in order to emphasize the shot-on-a-soundstage look. Evoking the movie past, he's trying to get at the dark side that was left out of the old cliché plots. But the improvisational, Cassavetes-like psychodrama that develops between the stars (Robert De Niro and Liza Minnelli) seems hollow and makes us uneasy, and sequences go on covering the same uncertain ground. De Niro plays a restless hipster, a tenor-sax player who's frustrated in the big-band era—he's already into the progressive bop that's not yet accepted. Minnelli is a big-band singer who becomes popular with a wide audience through records and in musical movies. The story is about their meeting at a V-J Day celebration, their marriage, its dissolution, and their diverging musical paths. Though his role lacks depth and likability, De Niro, sleek and handsome and jumpy, brings it a locked-in, hotheaded intensity that almost holds the picture together—for the first half, anyway. But the story loses momentum once the girl gets pregnant. Trying to be subdued, Minnelli seems somewhat dazed—openmouthed and vacuous and unpleasantly overripe. Her two big numbers ("But the World Turns Round" and the title song) are, however, in their own wildly hysterical show-biz terms, smashing (and she's in superb voice). With Diahnne Abbott, Lionel Stander, Barry Primus, Mary Kay Place, Lenny Gaines, George Memmoli, and George Auld, who gives a good, sour performance as the jaundiced bandleader and also dubs De Niro's sax. In addition to some mellow big-band standards, there are new songs by John Kander and Fred Ebb. The screenplay started with Earl Mac Rauch; then Mardik Martin, the cast, and others worked on it. The cinematography is by Laszlo Kovacs; Irving Lerner and Marcia Lucas were the editors. (Film Forum; March 18-19.)

The Night of the Shooting Stars (1983)—In its feeling and completeness, this film by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani may rank close to Jean Renoir's bafflingly beautiful "Grand Illusion;" and maybe, because it's about the Second World War and Renoir's film was about the First, at times it's like a more deracinated "Grand Illusion." The story is a woman's memories of her adventures as a six-year-old in a Tuscan village and its environs during the summer of 1944, when the American troops were rumored only days away, and the Germans who had held the area under occupation were preparing to clear out—preparations that included mining the houses so they could blow them up. Yet this setting is magical, like a Shakespearean forest, and the woman's account has the quality of folklore and legend, and even its most tragic moments can be dizzyingly comic. With Omero Antonutti as the leader of the group of two or three dozen villagers who sneak away in the night to find the Americans. The script is by the Tavianis and the producer, Giuliani G. De Negri, with the collaboration of Tonino Guerra; the score is by Nicola Piovani; cinematography is by Franco di Giacomo. In Italian. (2/7/83) (68th St. Playhouse.)

Ninotchka (1939)—"Garbo laughs," said the original ads, but there is by now a widespread story that when the time came for her laughing scene she pantomimed laughter beautifully, but no sound emerged; it was later provided by someone anonymous in the lab. The rest of her performance is her own, and she brings her incredible sensual abandon to the role of a glum, scientifically trained Bolshevik envoy who succumbs to Parisian freedom—i.e., champagne. The film includes a historic encounter, when the great instinctual artist of the screen meets the great stylist and technician of the stage—Ina Claire, as a Russian grand duchess. The fur flies exquisitely. Directed by Ernst Lubitsch, this light, satirical comedy has the nonchalance and the sophistication that were his trademark—but it also reveals that this time the trade marked him too high. There's an obviousness here; we can feel that we're being played down to. With Melvyn Douglas, Sig Rumann, Felix Bressart, Bela Lugosi, Alexander Granach, and George Tobias. Screenplay by Charles Brackett, Billy Wilder, and Walter Reisch, from a screen story by Melchior Lengyel. (The material is no more than a musical-comedy turn, which it became in the stage musical "Silk Stockings," filmed in 1957.) (Regency; March 22-24.)

El Norte—An independently made epic about the flight of two oppressed, terrorized young Guatemalans—Rosa (Zaide Silvia Gutierrez) and her brother Enrique (David Villalpando) —who travel from their Mayan village in the highlands to modern Los Angeles, where they pass themselves off as Mexicans and become part of the Hispanic cheap-labor force. Written by the director, Gregory Nava, and his wife, Anna Thomas, who was the producer, the film tries to cover all the bases—the typical difficult, wrenching experiences of Central American refugees. It's uninspired, but the subject has so much resonance that the picture doesn't leave you feeling quite as empty as an ordinary mediocre movie does. With Stella Quan, Trinidad Silva, and Lupe Ontiveros. In Spanish. (2/20/84) (R.K.O. Century Art. . . . ¶ 72nd Street East; through March 15. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; through March 22.)

The Passenger (1975)—Antonioni's film about an estranged London TV-news reporter trying to flee the coop of himself. Everything has staled for him—work and personal life both—and Antonioni makes, for the first time in his career, a clear causal connection between a character's situation and his environment. The reporter is on the track of a story in a remote part of Africa. He seizes the chance to exchange his identity for a dead man's, and takes on the dead man's slowly revealed undercover missions, which endow him with political purpose. The film is psychologically complex, dwelling on parallel themes about disjuncture and ambiguity, but also declarative in a way that is unique in Antonioni's work; it is a picture of astonishing aesthetic beauty and technical innovation. Jack Nicholson, as the reporter, gives a performance that is a marvel of insight about a man whose chances are running out. Maria Schneider exquisitely plays a soft-voiced, attentive stranger whom he meets in his new identity. (Regency; March 20-21.)

The Right Stuff—Based on Tom Wolfe's 1979 book, this often satirical epic—a reënactment of the early years of the space program (1947-63)—gives off a pleasurable hum. The writer-director Philip Kaufman is working on a broad canvas and it excites him. The movie contrasts Chuck Yeager (Sam Shepard) and the other early test pilots who risk their lives in secrecy with the seven publicly acclaimed astronauts who replace the chimps that were sent up in the first American space capsules. The movie is more than a little skewed: it's Kaufman's—and Tom Wolfe's—dreamy vision of the nonchalant Yeager and a past that never was, set against a comic view of the modern hype-bound world. With Dennis Quaid, Ed Harris, Fred Ward, Scott Glenn, Pamela Reed, Veronica Cartwright, Jeff Goldblum, Barbara Hershey, Mary Jo Deschanel, Kim Stanley, Brigadier General Chuck Yeager as a bartender, Donald Moffat as Lyndon Johnson, and Robert Beer as Eisenhower. Cinematography by Caleb Deschanel; special visual effects by Jordan Belson. (10/17/83) (Loews 83rd Quad, and Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Manhattan; March 14.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24

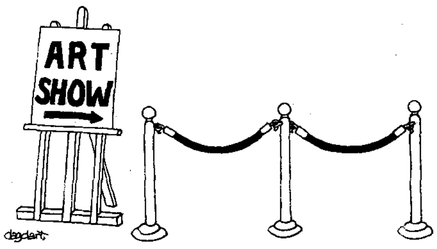
Scarface—Directed by Brian De Palma from a script by Oliver Stone, this two-hour-and-forty-nine-minute remake of the 1932 "Scarface" has the length of an epic but not the texture of an epic. Al Pacino's Tony Montana, a Cuban who scrambles to the top of the Miami drug world, is just starting to learn the ropes and then, sated with wealth and dope, he's moldy. The picture is peddling macho primitivism and at the same time making it absurd. It's a druggy spectacle—manic yet exhausted, with De Palma entering into the derangement and trying to bring something larger than life out of Tony's debauchery. This may be the only action picture that turns into an allegory of impotence. With F. Murray Abraham, Steven Bauer, Robert Loggia, Michelle Pfeiffer, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Paul Shenar, Harris Yulin, Arnaldo Santana, Richard Belzer, and Miriam Colon. Cinematography by John A. Alonzo; the designer Ferdinando Scarfiotti served as visual consultant; the score is by Giorgio Moroder. (12/26/83) (R.K.O. Century Warner Twin; through March 15. . . . ¶ Criterion Theatres; starting March 16.)

Silkwood—An absorbing but cloudy and unfocussed account of Karen Silkwood's union activism, her contamination by plutonium, and her death in a single-car crash. Directed by Mike Nichols, this passive advocacy film is permeated with paranoia and hopelessness. As the heroine, Meryl Streep has the external details of "Okie bad girl" down pat, but she's like a replicant—all shtick. Kurt Russell, who plays Karen's lover, is used mostly for his bare chest and his dimples. Cher (as Karen's friend and roommate) has a lovely, dark-lady presence, but she's used as a lesbian Mona Lisa, all faraway smiles and shrugs. As a cosmetician in a mortuary, Diana Scarwid gets laughs out of her tight walk and line readings—she sounds like Jean Harlow as a Valley Girl. The cast includes Craig T. Nelson, Ron Silver, E. Katherine Kerr, Sudie Bond, Josef Sommer, and Fred Ward. The script is by Nora Ephron and Alice Arlen. (1/9/84) (R.K.O. Century National Twin. . . . ¶ Baronet; through March 22.)

Splash—With Tom Hanks and Daryl Hannah, directed by Ron Howard. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Gramercy, U.A. 85th St. East, Olympia Quad, and R.K.O. Century National Twin.)

Star 80—Written and directed by Bob Fosse, this movie is based on accounts of the murder of the *Playboy* playmate Dorothy Stratten by her estranged bodybuilder husband, Paul Snider, who, after killing her, sodomized the corpse and then shot himself. Fosse uses the case as evidence that murder is inherent in pornography and that the whole world is scummy. As Snider, Eric Roberts gets the film's central idea across: that Snider represents a mutation of the *Playboy* "philosophy," and that it's his frustration at not becoming a success like his idol, Hugh Hefner, that's driving him crazy. Mariel Hemingway tries hard as Dorothy, but she's all wrong for the part—she's simply not a Bunny type. Fosse has gone so far that the question arises: Can a movie get by with total disgust for its subject? Fosse piles up such an accumulation of sordid scenes that the movie is nauseated by itself. With Carroll Baker, Josh Mostel, Cliff Robertson, and Roger Rees. Cinematography by Sven Nykvist, (11/28/83) (St. Marks Cinema; March 16-22.)

A Star Is Born (1954)—Grandiose, emotionally charged musical version of the 1937 tear-jerker about Hollywood, which featured Janet Gaynor as the fresh young star and Fredric March as the washed-up star she marries. This time, Judy Garland and James Mason are the leads (although she looks tired and worn, and he gives such a remarkable performance as the decaying actor that he brings a bloom to the movie). This updated version is a terrible, fascinating orgy of self-pity and cynicism and mythmaking. Garland's jagged, tremulous performance is nakedly intense; her (overproduced) musical numbers include the capering "Born in a Trunk" and the dark, heavy torch song "The Man That Got Away." With Charles Bickford, Jack Carson, and Tommy Noonan. George Cukor directed, from Moss Hart's acerbic rewrite of the original (which Dorothy Parker had worked on). George Hoyningen-Huené served as color consultant, and the strikingly sumptuous color design gives the film deep, neurotic, emotional tones. (The 1976 remake, with Streisand and Kristofferson, switched the milieu to the rock world.) (Ziegfeld; starting March 16.)



Stormy Weather (1943)—Vague, wandering show-biz story—a fictionalized bio of Bill Robinson—but marvellous musical numbers. With Robinson, Fats Waller (doing "Ain't Misbehavin' "), Lena Horne, Cab Calloway, Dooley Wilson, Katherine Dunham and her dancers, the great Nicholas Brothers, Zutty Singleton, Ada Brown, Eddie (Rochester) Anderson, Benny Carter, and many other black performers and musicians. There are so many famous people in this movie that sometimes three or four "greats" are packed together in the drably staged scenes. Andrew Stone directed, and Clarence Robinson and Nick Castle staged the dances. The script, by Frederick Jackson and Ted Koehler, is about as bad as a script can be. In black-and-white, originally released in sepia. (In "Hi, Mom!" De Palma parodies the use of sepia for black subjects.) (Film Forum; March 18-19.)

Sudden Impact—Clint Eastwood as Dirty Harry Callahan of the San Francisco Police Department for the fourth time, and the picture is a slightly psychopathic version of an old Saturday-afternoon serial, with Harry sneering at the scum and cursing them before he shoots them. The murderer he's on the trail of is played by Sondra Locke, who, it turns out, is a saintly executioner, much like him; she's taking care of her quota of scum, and might just as well be called Dirty Harriet. The whole thing is so obvious that it might be mistaken for parody if the sledgehammer-slow pacing didn't tell you that the director (Eastwood) wasn't in on the joke. With Pat Hingle, Audrie J. Neenan, Bradford Dillman, Albert Popwell, Paul Drake, Jack Thibeau, Mara Corday, and Michael V. Gazzo. (1/23/84) (Criterion Theatres.)

The Ten Commandments (1956)—Charlton Heston is the highly athletic Moses; Anne Baxter is the kittenish princess who loves him; Judith Anderson is the sinister slave who knows the secret of his Jewish birth; Cedric Hardwicke is the likable old Pharaoh; Yul Brynner is the prince who beats Moses to the Egyptian throne; Edward G. Robinson is the traitor to the Jews; Debra Paget is the young slave old Robinson has got his eyes on. Stir them all together, throw in stone tablets and a whopping big Golden Calf, part the Red Sea, and you've got Cecil B. De Mille's epic—three hours and thirty-eight minutes of it. As old-fashioned hokum, it's palatable and rather tasty. Also with Yvonne de Carlo, John Derek, John Carradine, Nina Foch, Douglass Dumbrille, Martha Scott, Vincent Price, Henry Wilcoxon, and H. B. Warner. (Embassy 1.)

Tender Mercies—This bare-bones "art" movie is about the healing of Mac Sledge (Robert Duvall), a legendary country-and-Western singer who has become an alcoholic wreck. The film is said to be honest and about real people, and it affects some viewers very powerfully; audiences are unusually still—almost reverent—as the born-again Mac is baptized at the church of the Vietnam widow (Tess Harper) whose frontier-woman steadfastness has made his redemption possible. The Australian director Bruce Beresford, making his American début with this inspirational film, has shot it in bright sunshine out in the middle of nowhere; the widow's motel—

gas station is as isolated as the mansion in "Giant." (It's a mystery how she could ever make a living from it.) Mostly the picture consists of silences; long shots of the bleak, flat land, showing the horizon line (it gives the film integrity); and Duvall's determination to make you see that he's keeping his emotions to himself; and Tess Harper staring out of her cornflower-blue headlights. (These two have matching deep-sunk eyes.) The theme song—which Duvall sings in a dry, unmusical voice—is called "It Hurts to Face Reality." Written by Horton Foote, master of arid realism, the script recalls the alleged Golden Age of Television. With Ellen Barkin and Betty Buckley. (5/16/83) (Manhattan.)

Terms of Endearment—Retro-forties virtue piled on the cartoon underpinnings of TV comedy shows. The movie is a Freudian story of role reversals between mother (Shirley MacLaine) and daughter (Debra Winger), told in a slaphappy style. Adapted (from Larry McMurtry's novel) and directed by James L. Brooks, this is the kind of bogus picture that gets people to say, "I saw myself in those characters." Of course they see themselves in it; Brooks guides the actors with both his eyes on the audience. The mother is a TV-museum piece, like the characters in "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman" or "Soap;" she's warped. And so is the pie-eyed lecher who's her next-door neighbor—a former astronaut, played by Jack Nicholson. At the end, the picture says, "You can go home now—you've laughed, you've cried." What's infuriating about it is its calculated humanity. What makes it tolerable are the performers. Debra Winger is incredibly vivid; Nicholson is alert and polished. And the cast includes John Lithgow, Jeff Daniels, Troy Bishop, and Huckleberry Fox. (12/12/83) (Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ 34th St. East, and Coronet; through March 22. . . . ¶ Baronet; starting March 23.)

Thunderball (1965)—Sean Connery as James Bond. The setting is Caribbean; the enemy is Adolfo Celi, playing the mastermind of SPECTRE, who stoops to using sharks. Terence Young directed. Not bad, but not quite top-grade Bond. A little too much underwater war-ballet. With Claudine Auger and Luciana Paluzzi, and, of course, Bernard Lee and Lois Maxwell. The script was written by Richard Maibaum and John Hopkins. (Hollywood Twin Cinema 1; March 22-24.)

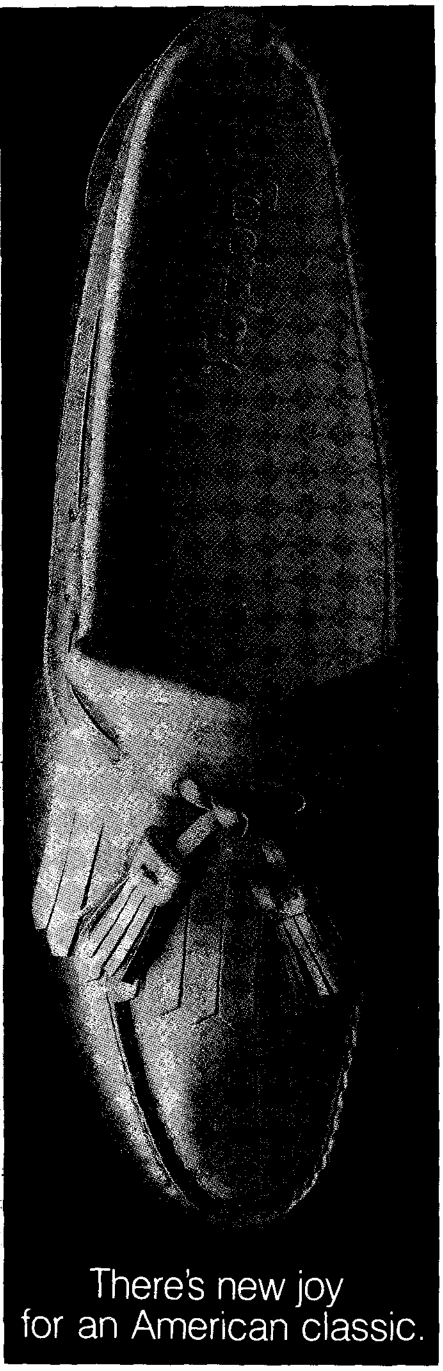
Under Fire—A beautiful piece of new-style classical moviemaking. Set in Nicaragua in 1979, during the last days of Somoza's dictatorship, the film is a little like Peter Weir's "The Year of Living Dangerously," but visually and in its romantic revolutionary spirit it's more like Pontecorvo's "The Battle of Algiers." The director, Roger Spottiswoode, brings the Nicaragua of countless news stories right to the center of our consciousness by showing us how three grownup Americans react to the Sandinist revolution. The stars are the unostentatiously fine actor Nick Nolte as the photojournalist hero—part artist, part automaton; Joanna Cassidy, strong and stunning as a radio reporter; and Gene Hackman in one of his wonderfully expansive performances as a jaunty, professionally likable war correspondent. With Jean-Louis Trintignant, Ed Harris, René Enriquez, and Richard Masur. The often edgy and maliciously smart script, by Ron Shelton (working from a first draft by Clayton Frohman), gives the actors some very knowing material. The cinematography is by John Alcott; the Jerry Goldsmith score, which features a bamboo flute from the Andes with a barely perceptible electronic shadow effect, is a beauty. Shot in Mexico. (10/31/83) (Olympia Quad; through March 15.)

Urban Cowboy (1980)—Aaron Latham's article "The Urban Cowboy," featured on the September 12, 1978, cover of *Esquire*, was subtitled "Saturday Night Fever, Country & Western Style," and it was quite clearly a set of variations on the "Saturday Night Fever" theme. According to Latham, the headquarters of the young hardhats who worked in the petrochemical plants around Houston was a vast honky-tonk called Gilley's, which featured a mechanical bull, and these anomic young Southwesterners had no way to prove their manhood except by dressing up in boots and jeans and cowboy hats and trying to live out the myths of the West by riding this contraption. The film, directed by James Bridges, from a script he wrote with Latham, views its young hero, Bud (John Travolta), as rootless and ignorant. But on the assumption (probably false) that the audience believes in those antiquated macho values and wants to see them on the screen, the movie also tries to reactivate the cowboy mythology. It dredges up an ex-convict villain (Scott Glenn) out of an ancient Western, so Bud can defeat him on the bucking machine and beat him up in a fistfight as well. The picture is scrappily edited, and the director seems willing to do almost anything for an immediate effect. In the best moments, satire and sultriness work together; in the worst moments, the sentimentality is so gross it makes us feel contemptuous of the moviemakers' shamelessness. With Debra Winger, who gives a steamy and very appealing performance as the girl Bud marries, Madolyn Smith as a slumming rich bitch, and Brooke Alderson and Barry Corbin as Bud's aunt and uncle. The country music doesn't supply much excitement. (Cinema Village; March 23-24.)

The Verdict (1982)—When Sidney Lumet gets serious, his energetic, fast-moving style falls apart, and he photographs scenes from fifty yards away. The camera sits like Death on the dark, angled images of this anguished movie about a Boston Irish lawyer, played by Paul Newman, who was hurt by those closest to him and became a booze-soaked failure. When the lawyer goes into court to fight the powerful Archdiocese of Boston, his faith in the judgment of the ordinary people who sit on the jury enables him to redeem himself. It's a Frank Capra setup given art-film treatment. (There's plenty of drizzle and brown gloom.) Newman plays his role for all it has got, making himself look softer and heavier, and even a little jowly, but it's a bowed-down, sorrowful-sot performance—a tired old show-business view of "a good man." In its own sombre, inflated terms, the picture is effective, but it's dragged out so self-importantly that you have time to recognize what a hopelessly naïve, incompetent, and untrustworthy lawyer the hero is. With Charlotte Rampling, James Mason, Jack Warden, Lindsay Crouse, Milo O'Shea, Edward Binns, Julie Bovasso, Lewis Stadlen, and Wesley Addy. The script, by David Mamet, is based on a novel by Barry Reed. (1/10/83) (Hollywood Twin Cinema 2; March 21-22.)

Waxworks (1924)—The three episodes of this engaging, too-little-known German horror-fantasy incorporate extravagantly villainous performances—Conrad Veidt as Ivan the Terrible, Emil Jannings (in one of his rare comic portraits) as Haroun-al-Raschid, and Werner (Caligari) Krauss as Jack the Ripper. In the Veidt-Ivan sequence, which was obviously a major influence on Eisenstein's "Ivan the Terrible," Ivan is a jokester-poisoner who enjoys presenting his victims with hourglasses timed to run out at the precise moment of their deaths; one day he discovers an hourglass labelled "Ivan." The director, Paul Leni, a former Max Reinhardt collaborator, was an extraordinarily gifted scenic artist; the macabre expressionistic décor for the Jack the Ripper sequence is made entirely from sheets of painted paper. William Dieterle is also in the cast. (Thalia; March 19.)

Yentl—Barbra Streisand directed, produced, co-wrote, and stars in this musical version of the Isaac Bashevis Singer story "Yentl the Yeshiva Boy," and it's funny, delicate, and intense—all at the same time. Set in the thriving Polish-Jewish communities of an imaginary, glowing past, it tells of a young woman with a passion for religious study who grows up in a tradition-bound society where women are excluded from scholarship; when her widower father (who has secretly taught her) dies, she dresses as a boy and goes off to enroll in a yeshiva in a distant town. Dressed as a boy, Yentl for the first time feels attracted to a man—the virile, bearded Avigdor, played by Mandy Patinkin, who can hardly wait for his wedding to Hadass, played by Amy Irving. When these three repressed characters become entangled, the movie (like Singer's story) brushes up against darkness on the one hand and sex farce on the other. The music by Michel Legrand isn't varied enough and the lyrics by Alan and Marilyn Bergman are tainted with feminist psychobabble and Broadway uplift, but Streisand sings with passionate conviction. The cast includes Nehemiah Persoff as Yentl's papa, and Steven Hill as Hadass's father. The diffuse, poetic lighting is by the cinematographer David Watkin. (11/28/83) (St. Marks Cinema; through March 15.)



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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

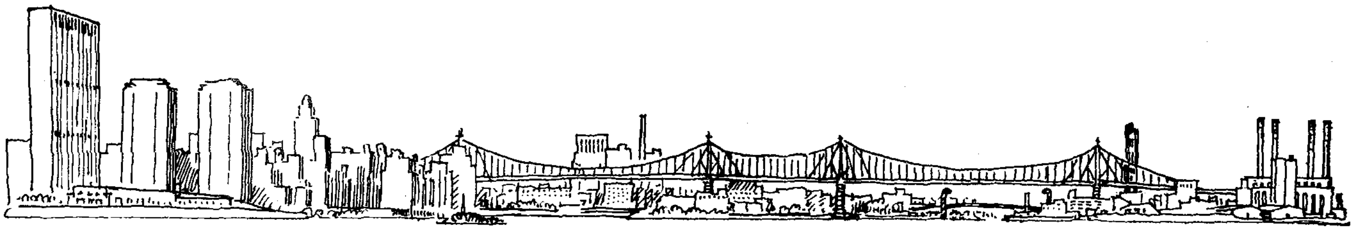
Notes and Comment

A FRIEND writes:

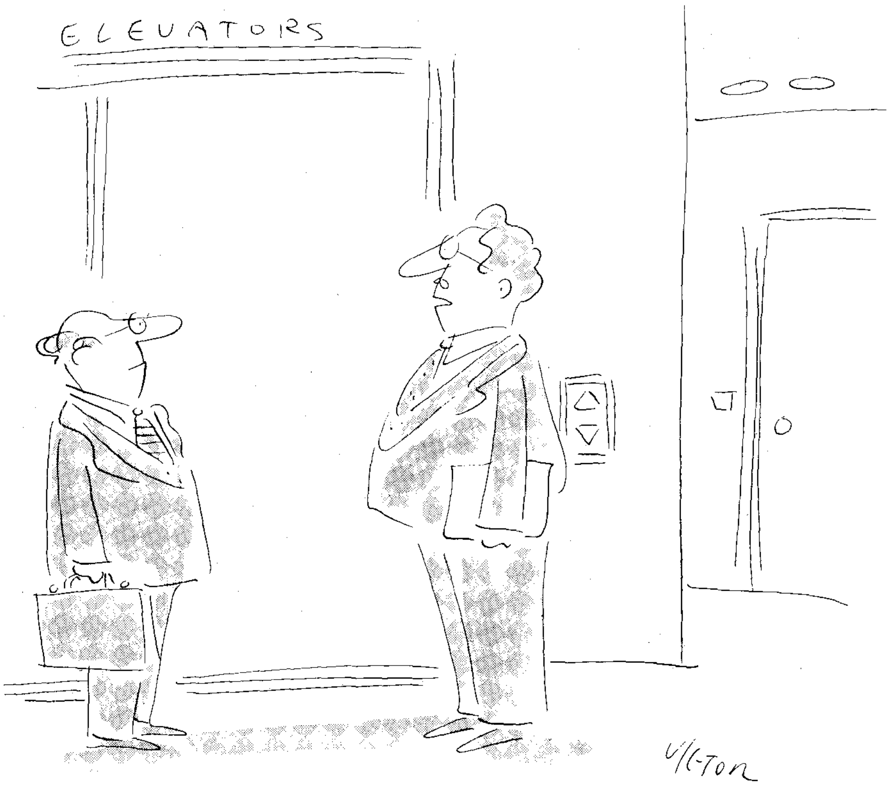
Cambridge, Massachusetts, where I learned what I know about politics by watching the City Council, holds an election every second year, amid all the sign-posting, sign-defacing, coalition-forming, independence-declaring, sidewalk-repairing, wake-attending, and general confetti-throwing common to such affairs. Elections, after all, are what politicians really enjoy, and in return they agree to serve the intervening terms. But, along with the shouting, the Cambridge elections offer a good deal of meat; they are worth voting in, because the candidates, once they've been elected, behave predictably on specific issues that matter. The city's most divisive issue for the last decade has been rent control. Some politicians are for it and some are against it, and since they say so in advance one knows whom to vote for, usually depending on whether one pays rent or collects it. Rarely do councillors reverse their positions once they're elected; when they do, they are ousted at the next vote. The upshot is, in fact, democracy—messy, coercive, sometimes bitter, and remarkably representative. Occasionally, though, a new candidate declares at the start of his campaign that he is sick of the "polarization" and the "confrontation" and the "rancor," and that he thinks a "new spirit of compromise" is in order, or, better yet, some new plan that will allow tenants to pay low rents and landlords to collect high rents. Cantabrigians, for the most part, are too savvy for such tactics, and the political zebras rarely win, though they often excite much comment, particularly among those who are neither tenants nor landlords.

The nation's political imagination seems to have been captured in recent weeks by the notion that there are "new ideas," and an as yet unspecified "politics of the future," vastly preferable to the musty politics of the past. This claim has intuitive appeal, for, after all, the antibiotic was a great improvement on the leech. But, though they may be quibbles, a couple of questions come to mind. First, what is meant by "ideas"? Strong, daring concepts, like "turn the other cheek," or "unalienable rights" that include "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," or "I have a dream" (or, for that matter, "the master race," or "the dictatorship of the proletariat")? Or, as seems more likely, given the history of American elections, are "new ideas" ones that start from the premise that our problems need little fixes, that the TV program is fine but the vertical-hold knob ought to be given a little twist? And then what if, like the idea that inspired the man who simultaneously smoked a pack of cigarettes and whistled "Dixie," "new ideas" have "newness" as their only virtue? Sometimes the benefits of evolution are debatable: Was color TV a better idea than black-and-white, and was that superior to radio, and was radio more fun than sitting around and talking, and how did they all compare to paddling about in the primordial soup? And sometimes progress is clearly regress: The crossbow may not have been a great idea, but the ICBM was infinitely worse. And, of course, there are a million ideas that no one has bothered to hatch, because they are stupid or silly: Should soldiers salute with the other hand? What about tax credits for eating Italian food and slugging down Chianti? A man who wore a red-white-and-blue top hat and drove a red-white-and-blue school bus once solicited my vote on the ground that, by a calculus of his own devising, the letters in the word "love" added up to sixteen, or fifty-four, or some such.

The point is obvious; still, the notion that somewhere there exists a set of new ideas is bewitching—at least, until the new ideas are announced. The reason, I think, is that an awful lot of us wish politics were less messy, less divisive, than they are. Take just one issue as an example: This country and this world include huge numbers of poor people. What is to be done about them? One idea is that everyone should give up some of



Richard Edes Harrison



"Well, Cunningham, it looks like we're stuck with each other for the next forty seconds."

• •

his or her wealth. Another idea—Reagan's idea, though he shouldn't be blamed for its creation—is that nothing should be done (except, perhaps, hope that a rising tide will float millions of sunken ships). A few people support the first idea, and more back the second, but most of us are somewhere in the middle. We don't, for a combination of ethical and aesthetic reasons, believe in letting the poor starve in the streets, but we don't much like the idea of the welfare system, in part because it doesn't work very well but mostly because it costs a hell of a lot in taxes and we want, you know, a videocassette recorder. Now, if someone has a new idea about how to make the welfare system more efficient, that is fine. And if someone has a new idea about sharing the wealth, that is fine, too (though not likely to win many votes). But if someone just has "new ideas" and "politics of the future" and contempt for the past, such a platform suggests to the ambivalent in us that perhaps we can avoid the choices between, in this instance, rich and poor—perhaps they will be able to eat cake, and we will be able to eat cake, and *everyone* will be able to eat cake, and have it, too. Alchemy would be dandy, but in the meantime democracy is nothing less and nothing more than real and tough choices, one after another.

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Exit Poll

UNVISITED by any of the candidates, the pupils in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades of a public school in a nearby Connecticut town voted last week for President of the United States, with the following results:

Reagan	243
Hart	80
Glenn	36
Jesse Jackson	30
Mondale	28
Bush	6
George Washington	5
Jimmy Carter	4
McGovern	3
Eddie Murphy	3
ZZ Top	1
Michael Jackson	1
Teddy Ziegler (local dark horse)	1

Gala

WHEN a television show is taped "live" in a large hall, the performers are frequently afflicted by theatrical schizophrenia. On the one hand, they are appearing before a vast audience of real people, many of whom see and hear them from a considerable distance. On the other hand, they must play in a much more intimate fashion directly to an invisible public consisting of millions of television viewers. This idea occurred to us one evening last week as we stood backstage at the Radio City Music Hall watching twenty-odd singers, dancers, and musicians—Beverly Sills, James Levine, Itzhak Perlman, Jessye Norman, Cornell MacNeil, James McCracken, Natalia Makarova, Anthony Dowell, and James Galway, to name a few—trying to focus their talents in that cavernous Art Deco auditorium. The occasion was Channel 13's "Gala of Stars," the 1984 salute to public television from the world of classical and popular entertainment, which is appearing on the tube on March 18th. The participants had to decide whether to concentrate on the fifty-eight hundred faces in the hall (Radio City is wired for sound but has practically no live acoustics, even onstage) or to settle for close contact with nine television cameras. Most of them settled for the cameras. The program began at 8:12 P.M. with a greeting from John Jay Iselin, the president of Channel 13, and ended five hours later with the Rockettes—groggy but game—performing their famous high kicks to a rousing Sousa march. (Since the program was taped out of order, the television audience would see the show begin with a red-lit steam curtain rising from the front of the stage and two organists playing "The Ride of the Valkyries.") The hero of the evening was James Levine, who conducted the American Symphony Orchestra in everything from "Ol' Man River" to the triumphal scene from Verdi's "Aida." The heroine was the unflappable Beverly Sills, who introduced the acts and chatted up an audience that became increasingly restive as the night wore on. ("The producers said I could talk indefinitely as long as I didn't tell my Paderewski joke again," she said. "So I'll tell you my bee joke instead.")

Considering the complexities of the production—sections of stage floor moved up and down, lighting had to be constantly readjusted, and musicians shuttled between pit and stage—there were remarkably few serious glitches. Placido Domingo came down with a cold and had to be replaced on the day of the taping by the American bass-baritone Samuel Ramey in a solo turn and by James McCracken singing the tenor role of Radamès. The six "Aida" soloists, who were spaced across the front of the stage with their backs to conductor, orchestra, and chorus, had to glance surreptitiously sidewise to catch the movements of Maestro Levine's baton. (During an afternoon rehearsal, the steam curtain at their feet had suddenly erupted and nearly smothered the entire ensemble.) Richard Cragun, partnering Natalia Makarova in a lyrical pas de deux, had costume trouble (his pants split), and later in the program Miss Makarova slipped off balance during a deep knee bend as she was performing a torrid tango with Gary Chryst.

We spent the first half of the program in the wings, watching tuxedo-clad gentlemen and elegantly dressed ladies enter and exit. We saw Beverly Sills in embroidered black chiffon, Roberta Peters in pink silk, Frederica von Stade in Victorian black lace, Martina Arroyo in beige-and-black striped satin, Jessye Norman in electric-blue satin, and Renata Scotto (who sang Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene) in a simple black turtleneck. Then we wandered back to the greenroom—a noisy, cheerful alcove containing snacks and soft drinks—where we found James McCracken and Cornell MacNeil reminiscing about their Music Hall years. "I sang 'Thine Alone' as a solo four or five times a day," said Mr. McCracken, a ruddy-faced man with an aureole of fluffy white hair. "It was the first time I'd ever worked with a lighted baton—the conductor was so far off that that was the only way I could see him." Mr. MacNeil, an ebullient dark-haired man who has aquiline features and the booming voice of a Verdi baritone, told us that he had announced both V-E Day and V-J Day from the Radio City stage. "I was singing in the Glee Club, for about a dollar thirty-seven a performance, and doing some backstage voices as well," he said. "When the news came through, they put a piece of paper in my hand and sent me out to tell the people."

We asked both singers what roles they were performing at the moment.

Mr. McCracken told us that he was flying back to Boston to sing the death scene from "Otello"—Otello is his favorite role—at a benefit for the Boston Opera.

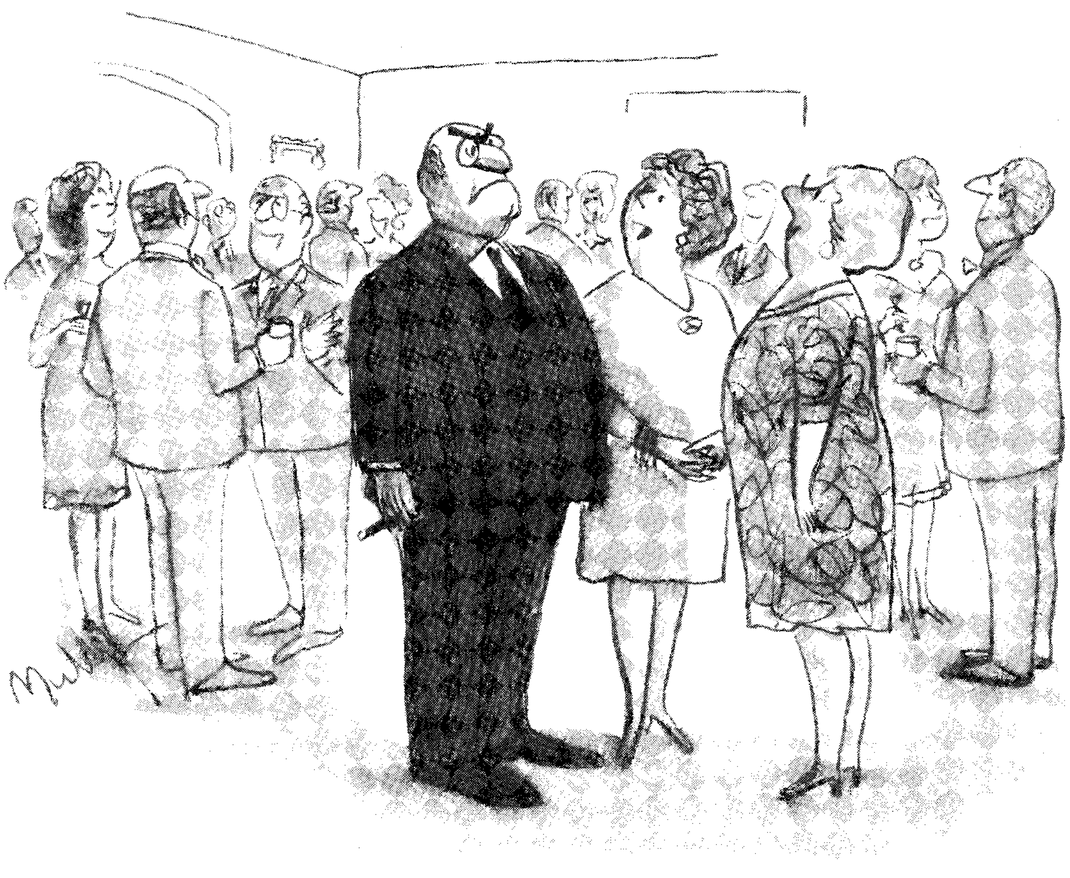
Mr. MacNeil told us that he was rehearsing the part of Gianciotto, the evil brother, in a new production of Zandonai's "Francesca da Rimini," at the Met. "We had our first costume *prova* today," he said, "and we discovered that our copper armor—this is the thirteenth century, mind you—was a bit noisy. The articulation of the knee pieces produced a sharp sound every time somebody moved, and, with forty chorus men clacking all over the stage, the soprano had to stop because she couldn't hear the orchestra. They're going to fix the armor with rubber pads."

We talked to Samuel Ramey ("Singing 'Ol' Man River' without a rehearsal was a shock, because the orchestral parts were a halftone higher than I'm used to") and Roberta Peters ("Mother used to bring me down here from the Bronx to hear Jan Peerce sing 'Bluebird of Happiness,' and then he became my mentor at the Met"). Next, Peter Hofman, a tall, blond German heldentenor, who divides his time between Wagnerian heroes and rock concerts, told us, "My next role is Lohengrin, in Salzburg, and the day after I'm finished there I go on a six-week rock tour. And I have a new album—'Ivory Man'—coming out on CBS records."

Then we sat down beside Itzhak Perlman, who had just played a sizzling "Zigeunerweise," and asked what he'd been doing lately.

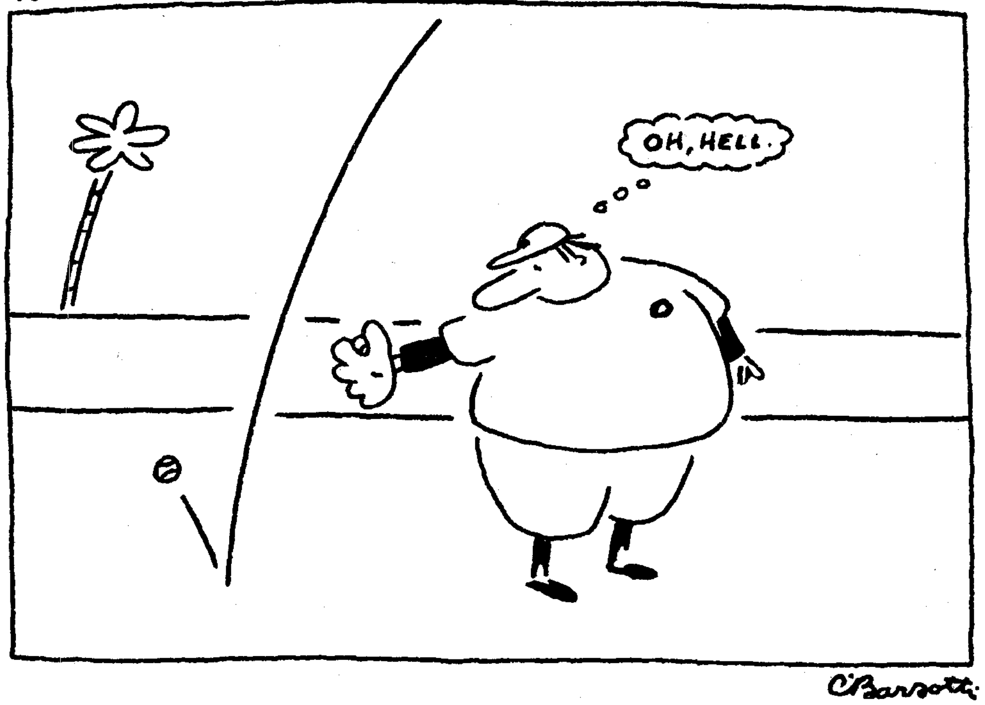
He said that he'd recently returned from the West Coast, where he played the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. "Michael Tilson Thomas was conducting that night, but Zubin Mehta was in town as well," he went on. "Zubin called up and said, 'I'd like to hear you tonight. I'll drive you to the hall.' He was backstage during the intermission, and when I walked out onstage I looked around and there was Zubin right behind me, holding the baton. Michael and Zubin had set that up between them. Usually, I *sense* these things, but this time I was really surprised. Afterward, Zubin sent me a bill—seven hundred dollars for meals, transportation, and phone calls, and seven dollars and fifty cents for accompaniment."

Renata Scotto, a tiny woman with a heart-shaped face and an enormous soprano voice, told us that she had dressed simply in order to emphasize



"Pamela, too, dabbles in the stock market. A little gypsy tells her the best times to buy and the best times to unload."

WHY THEY HAVE SPRING TRAINING



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the dramatic character of Lady Macbeth's aria. "I play her as a young, ambitious, very sexy lady who must break down completely, inside and outside, by the time she gets to the sleepwalking scene," she said.

Martina Arroyo, the evening's Aida, told us that she'd had to cheat a bit to watch Maestro Levine. "Jimmy was fabulous," she said. "He tried so hard to let me see the movement of his hands that he almost fell over backward."

"What is it like to perform on that enormous stage?" we asked.

"This afternoon, all the soloists were discouraged, because every note we sang just seemed to splatter against the walls," Miss Arroyo replied. "So we decided not to listen to ourselves. We said, 'Let's just feel our way with vocal technique, and see if that doesn't work better.' "

Toward the end of the evening, Miss Sills stopped by for a glass of Perrier. "Fortunately, I know or have worked with most of the people on the program, so I can talk about them endlessly," she told us, flashing her thousand-watt smile. "I'm a little sad about giving up my entrance—they wanted me to fly across the stage in a harness—but my husband thought it might damage my back. So I've been going up and down on elevators all night. You know, one of the reasons we all do these galas is that PBS has done so much to promote the arts. I've always said that it's the live performances on television that really get people interested in opera, concerts, and ballet. All my opera performances were live. I like the feeling of being a trapeze artist performing without a net. And, even if I didn't get to fly across the stage, that's certainly what we're all doing here tonight."

Richness

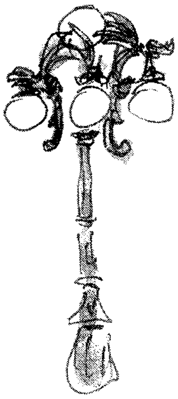
EARLY last Tuesday morning, John Adniolphi, the secretary of the National Coffee Association, which has its headquarters downtown and represents "ninety per cent of America's roasting capacity," went up to Hunter College to oversee a large brewing. "I can't divulge the brand, but it can be purchased in any supermarket," he told us. "It was brewed properly—fifty-five cups per pound of ground—and it turned out nice and rich. New York City water, which is low in mineral content, is very good for coffeemaking."

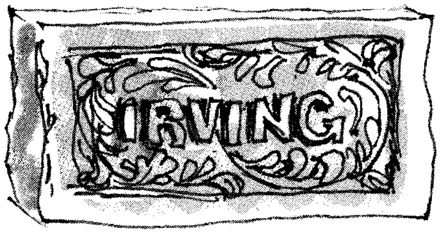
Pretty soon, the guests began to drift in. Marilyn Machlowitz, Ph.D., who was moderating a morning roundtable discussion among four "achievers"—sponsored by the National Coffee Association, which is attempting to sell its product by insisting that it produces "coffee achievers"—told us that she uses a combination of Norelco and Melitta technology to brew her morning cup, that she misses drinking coffee from plastic-foam cups, as she did in her college days ("They impart a certain flavor, and, besides, you can play with them when you're done"), and that she has given up on Sweet 'n Low, milk, and all other additives and now just knocks it back black. Pretty soon, the first of the panelists arrived—Suzanne Ciani, a composer and producer of electronic music, who sometimes does art and sometimes does commercials, and who makes cappuccino every A.M., "absolutely without fail." It has taken her years to learn to foam the milk consistently, and these days she refuses to drink coffee that has been sitting around studios and the like. Next to Miss Ciani at the panelists' table was Robert S. Woods, who plays Bo Buchanan, an oil-rich Texan, on the soap opera "One Life to Live," and who told us that when actors on TV drink coffee it is actually coffee but when they seem to be drinking whiskey it is iced tea. "There are coffeepots all over the set," he said. "I must go through twenty cups a day." A third panelist, Walter Martin, told us he helps run a firm, Flying Foods, that imports fresh foods—St. Pierre fish from New Zealand, white truffles from Italy, that sort of thing—from parts of the world where they are cheap to parts of the world where they fetch a premium price. Each morning, Mr. Martin personally pours coffee for all his salesmen, because it is a nice thing to do, and because he has "found coffee intake to be in direct relation to sales." The fourth, and final, panelist, Julie Goldsmith Gilbert, who was sitting next to Mr. Martin, turned out to be a novelist, a playwright, a biographer, and a partisan of her own blend of Martinson and heavily espressoed granules of El Pico. She mixes two large tablespoonfuls of each, sprinkles the result with cinnamon, brews it in an old Melitta coffeepot, and then adds sufficient milk and half-and-half for a café-au-lait effect.

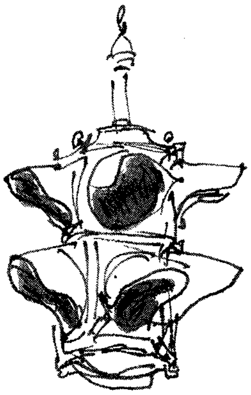
While we were chatting with Ms. Goldsmith Gilbert, it came time for the proceedings to get under way, so we went to our seat and listened for an hour as the panelists told a roomful of Hunter students how to be successful. Loving one's work, perseverance, integrity, adventurousness, determination, and some other things were recommended, and Miss Ciani told about a business she'd once started that manufactured leather clothing that lit up. Unfortunately, the business went bust. No one said anything *specifically* about coffee, but everyone had his or her own mug and took frequent sips.

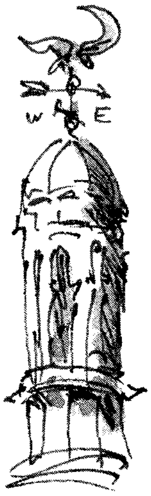
Dislocated

A COLD, wet breeze blew between fountains without water, street lamps without streets, birdbaths without birds, wheels without wagons, doors without doorways, spires without churches. The wind wailed around carved memorials to who knows what and God knows when. It was ten o'clock on a Saturday morning at the United House Wrecking Corporation, on Selleck Street, in Stamford, Connecticut. Customers and sightseers moved shivering through the chilly bazaar of the defunct, gazing at United's seven-acre assortment of dislocated cupolas, cornices, scrolls, friezes, plinths, tablets, nudes, cherubim, muses, Greeks, Romans, soldiers, sailors, saints, gnomes, elves, turtles, eagles, dogs, horses, and giant figures from the Danbury Fair. They examined racks of stained-glass windows, railings of every description, bathtubs, hawsers, doorknobs, dentists' chairs and drills, and barber chairs; they hurried into the shelter of several vast, warm buildings that were packed with a blend of antiques, quasi antiques, and up-to-date items. Two women arrived in a truck, dropped off a load of freshly carved wooden swans at the rear of one of the buildings, and departed, with still more wooden beaks bouncing in the back of their truck. The indoor customers drifted up and down aisles full of church pews, merry-go-round horses, traffic lights, birdcages, chandeliers, stuffed animals, stoves, scales, wheels of fortune, weathervanes, umbrella stands, flags, pennants, andirons, furniture, fish tanks with live fish. The most appealing item was a rusty brown movie projector, possibly still loaded with the powdery remains of "Orphans of the Storm."

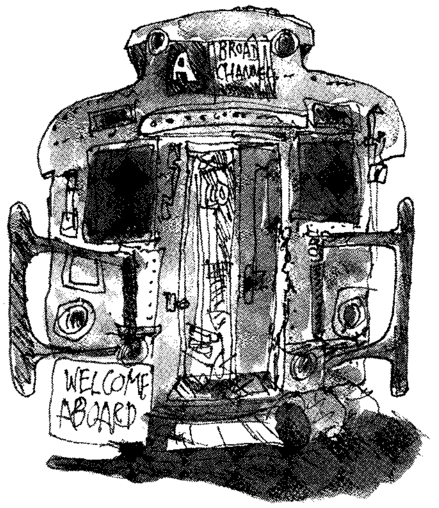


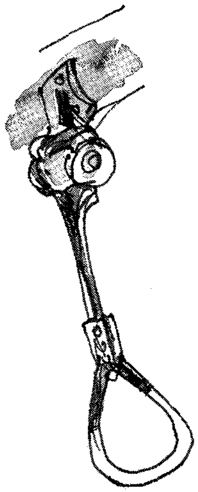




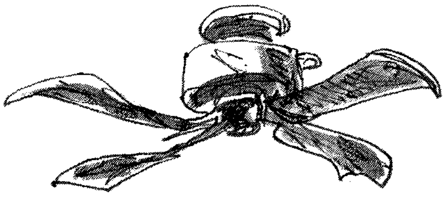


Outside, there was an aged New York City subway car, bereft of wheels—an A Train, once destined for Broad Channel, according to the sign at the front. Where passengers used to stand, there were now bathroom basins heaped—in pink, plum, raspberry, grape, lime, and other hues. Despite its condition, the car seemed a good bit more gracious than the current models. It had wicker seats; windows of the sort that sometimes opened if you pulled them up; and poles and strap handles made of shiny white enamel.





The ceiling, too, was white, and featured several large electric fans.



Near the main building, three women—apparently a mother and two daughters, in their twenties—were studying a stack of ancient wagon wheels.

"Here's a cute one," said one daughter.

"This one would fit on my porch," said the other, pointing to a different wheel. "How much do you think it is, though?"

Nobody could guess.

Followed by her sister and mother, the young woman rolled the wheel into the building and up to the cash register, and asked the price. The mother and sister waited at a distance. The young woman rolled the wheel back to her mother. "Thirty-five dollars, Mom," she said. "Is that too much?"

The mother gave a negative shrug. "Twenty, maybe, but not thirty-five." She stared critically at the flaking wheel. "It'll deteriorate," she said. They rolled the wheel out again, and left it near the door.

THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING

LIGHTNESS AND WEIGHT

1

THE idea of eternal return is a mysterious one: to think that everything recurs as we once experienced it, and that the recurrence itself recurs ad infinitum! It is a terrifying prospect. In the world of eternal return, the weight of unbearable responsibility lies heavy on every move we make. That is why Nietzsche called the idea of eternal return the heaviest of burdens ("*das grösste Schwergewicht*").

A life that disappears once and for all, that does not return, is then like a shadow, without weight, dead in advance, and whether it was horrible, beautiful, or sublime, its horror, sublimity, and beauty mean nothing.

2

THE heaviest of burdens crushes us, we sink beneath it, it pins us to the ground. But in the love poetry of every age the woman longs to be weighed down by the man's body. The heaviest of burdens is therefore simultaneously an image of life's most intense fulfillment. The heavier the burden, the closer our lives come to the earth, the more real and truthful they become.

Conversely, the absolute absence of a burden causes man to be lighter than air, to soar into the heights, take leave of the earth and his earthly being, and become only half real, his movements as free as they are insignificant.

What, then, shall we choose? Weight or lightness?

Parmenides posed this very question in the fifth century before Christ. He seems to have seen the world divided into pairs of opposites: light/darkness, fineness/coarseness, warmth/cold, being/nonbeing. One half of the opposition he called positive (light, fineness, warmth, being), the other negative. We might find this division into positive and negative poles childishly simple except for one difficulty: which one is positive, heaviness or lightness?

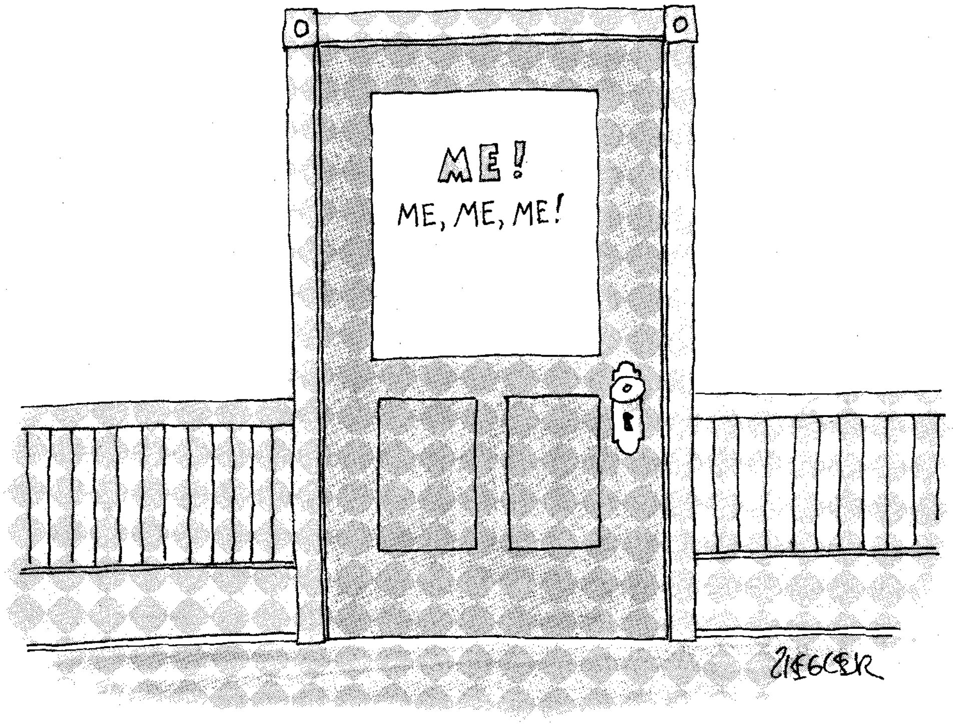
Parmenides responded: lightness is positive, weight negative.

Was he correct or not? That is the question. The only certainty is: the weight/lightness opposition is the most mysterious, most ambiguous of all.

3

I HAVE been thinking about Tomas for many years. But only in view of these reflections did I see him clearly. I saw him standing at the window of his flat and looking across the courtyard at the opposite walls, not knowing what to do.

He had first met Tereza about three weeks earlier in a small Czech town. They had spent scarcely an hour together. She had accompanied him to the station and waited with him until he boarded the train for Prague. Ten days later she paid him a visit. They made love the day she arrived. That night she came down with a fever, and stayed a whole week in his flat with the flu.



He had come to feel an inexplicable love for this all but complete stranger; she seemed a child to him, a child someone had put in a bulrush basket daubed with pitch and sent downstream for Tomas to fetch at the riverbank of his bed.

She stayed with him a week, until she was well again, then went back to her town, some hundred and twenty-five miles from Prague. And then came the time I have just spoken of and see as the key to his life: Standing by the window, he looked out over the courtyard at the walls opposite him and deliberated.

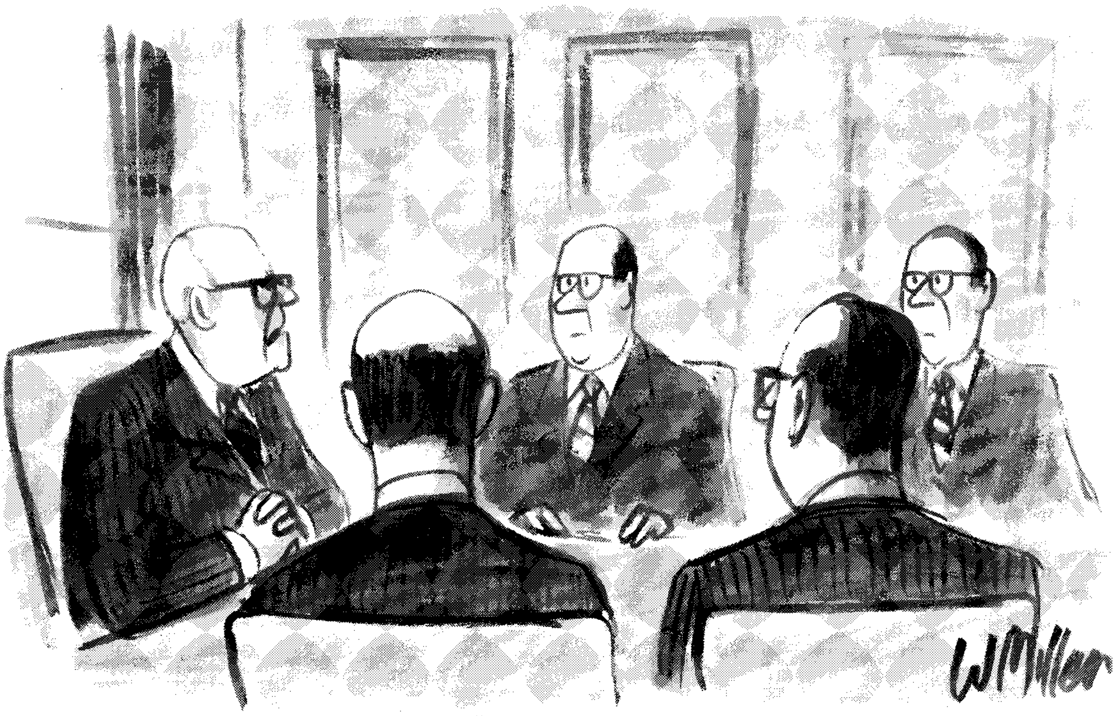
Should he call her back to Prague for good? He feared the responsibility. If he invited her to come, then come she would, and offer him up her life.

Or should he refrain from approaching her? Then she would remain a waitress in a hotel restaurant of a provincial town and he would never see her again.

Did he want her to come or did he not?

He looked out over the courtyard at the opposite walls, seeking an answer.

He kept recalling her lying on his couch; she reminded him of no one in his former life. She was neither mistress nor wife; she was a child whom he had taken from a bulrush basket that had been daubed with pitch and sent to the riverbank of his bed. She fell asleep. He knelt down next to her. Her feverous breath quickened and she gave out a weak moan. He pressed his face to hers and whispered calming words into her sleep. After a while he felt her breath return to normal and her face rise unconsciously to meet his. He smelled the delicate aroma of her fever and breathed it in, as if trying to glut himself with the intimacy of her body. And all at once he fancied she had been with him for many years and was dying. He had a sudden clear feeling that he would not survive her death. He would lie down beside her and want to die with her. He pressed his face into the pillow beside her head and kept it there for a long time.



"Hannibal got elephants over the Alps. Bearing that in mind, somebody think of something."

Now he was standing at the window trying to call that moment to account. What could it have been if not love declaring itself to him?

But was it love? The feeling of wanting to die beside her was clearly exaggerated: he had seen her only once before in his life! Was it simply the hysteria of a man who, aware deep down of his inaptitude for love, felt the self-deluding need to simulate it? His unconscious was so cowardly that the best partner it could choose for its little comedy was this miserable provincial waitress with practically no chance at all to enter his life!

Looking out over the courtyard at the dirty walls, he realized he had no idea whether it was hysteria or love.

And he was distressed that in a situation where a real man would instantly have known how to act he was vacillating and therefore depriving the most beautiful moments he had ever experienced (kneeling at her bed and thinking he would not survive her death) of their meaning.

He remained annoyed with himself until he realized that not knowing what he wanted was actually quite natural.

We can never know what to want, because as we live one life we can neither compare it with our previous lives nor perfect it in our lives to come.

Was it better to be with Tereza or to remain alone?

There is no means of testing which decision is better, because there is no basis for comparison. We live everything as it comes, without warning, like an actor going on cold. And what can life be worth if the first rehearsal for life is life itself? That is why life is always like a sketch. No, "sketch" is not quite the word, because a sketch is an outline of something, the groundwork for a picture, whereas the sketch that is our life is a sketch for nothing, an outline with no picture.

Einmal ist keinmal, said Tomas to himself. What happens but once, says the German adage, might as well not have happened at all. If we have only one life to live, we might as well not have lived at all.

4

BUT then one day at the hospital where Tomas worked as a surgeon, during a break between operations, a nurse called him to the telephone. He heard Tereza's voice coming from the receiver. She had phoned him from the railway station. He was overjoyed. Unfortunately he had something on that evening and could not invite her to his place until the next day. The moment he hung up, he reproached himself for not telling her to go straight there. He had time enough to cancel his plans, after all! He tried to imagine what Tereza would do in Prague during the thirty-six long hours before they were to meet, and had half a mind to jump into his car and drive through the streets looking for her.

She arrived the next evening, a handbag dangling from her shoulder, looking more elegant than before. She had a thick book under her arm. It was "Anna Karenina." She seemed in a good mood, even a little boisterous, and tried to make him think that she had just happened to drop in, that things had just worked out that way: she was in Prague on business, perhaps (at this point she became rather vague) to find a job.

Later, as they lay naked and spent side by side on the bed, he asked her where she was staying. It was night by then, and he offered to drive her there. Embarrassed, she answered that she still had to find a hotel and had left her suitcase at the station.

Only two days ago he had feared that if he invited her to Prague she would offer him up her life. When she told him her suitcase was at the station, he immediately realized that the suitcase contained her life and that she had left it at the station only until she could offer it up to him.

The two of them got into his car, which was parked in front of the house, and drove to the station. There he claimed the suitcase (it was large and enormously heavy) and took it and her home.

How had he come to make such a sudden decision when for nearly a fortnight he had wavered so much that he could not even bring himself to send a postcard asking her how she was?

He himself was surprised. He had acted against his principles. Ten years earlier, when he divorced his wife, he had celebrated the event the way others celebrate a marriage. He understood he was not born to live side by side with any woman and could be fully himself only as a bachelor. He tried to design his life in such a way that no woman could move in with a suitcase. That was why his flat had only the one bed. Even though it was wide enough, Tomas would tell his mistresses that he was unable to fall asleep with anyone next to him, and drive them home after midnight. And it was not the flu that kept him from sleeping with Tereza on her first visit. The first night he had slept in his large armchair, and the rest of that week he drove each night to the hospital, where he had a cot in his office.

But this time he fell asleep by her side. When he woke up the next morning, he found Tereza, who was still asleep, holding his hand. Could they have been hand in hand all night? It was hard to believe.

And while she breathed the deep breath of sleep and held his hand (firmly: he was unable to disengage it from her grip), the enormously heavy suitcase stood by the bed.

He refrained from loosening his hand from her grip for fear of waking her, and turned carefully on his side to observe her better.

Again it occurred to him that Tereza was a child put in a pitch-daubed bulrush basket and sent downstream. He couldn't very well let a basket with a child in it float down a stormy river! If the Pharaoh's daughter hadn't snatched the basket carrying little Moses from the waves, there would have been no Old Testament, no civilization as we now know it. How many ancient myths begin with the rescue of an abandoned child! If Polybus hadn't taken in the young Oedipus, Sophocles wouldn't have written his most beautiful tragedy!

Tomas did not realize at the time that metaphors are dangerous. Metaphors are not to be trifled with. A single metaphor can give birth to love.

5

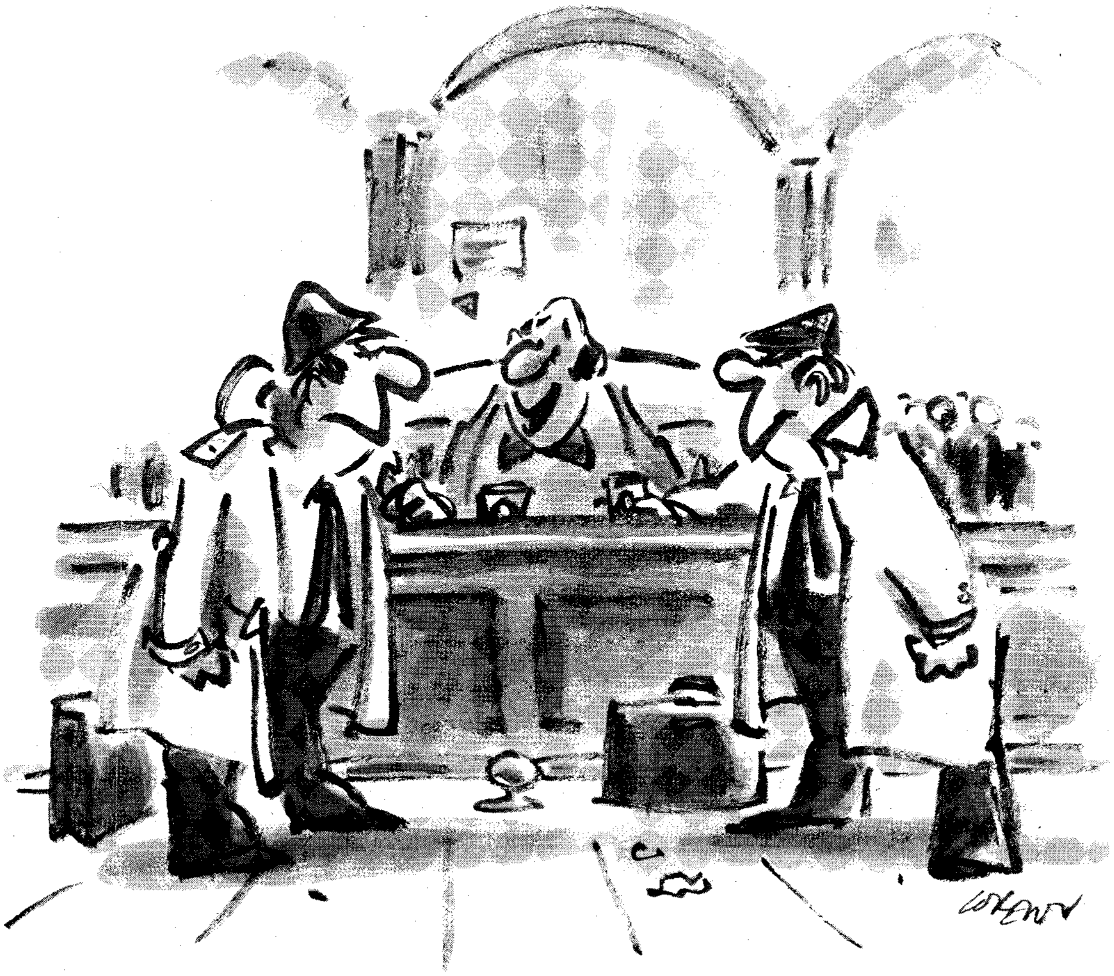
HE had lived a scant two years with his wife, and they had had a son. At the divorce proceedings the judge awarded the infant to its mother and ordered Tomas to pay a third of his salary for its support. He also granted him the right to visit the child every other week.

But each time Tomas was supposed to see him, the child's mother found an excuse to keep him away. He soon realized that bringing them expensive gifts would make things a good deal easier, that he was expected to bribe the mother for the son's love. He saw a future of quixotic attempts to inculcate his views in the boy, views opposed in every way to the mother's. The very thought of it exhausted him. When, one Sunday, the child's mother again cancelled a scheduled visit, Tomas decided on the spur of the moment never to see him again.

Why should he feel more for that child, to whom he was bound by nothing but a single improvident night, than for any other? He would be scrupulous about paying support; he just didn't want anybody making him fight for his son in the name of paternal sentiment!

Needless to say, he found no sympathizers. His own parents condemned him roundly: if Tomas refused to take an interest in his son, then they, Tomas's parents, would no longer take an interest in theirs. They made a great show of maintaining good relations with their daughter-in-law and trumpeted their exemplary stance and sense of justice.

Thus in practically no time he managed to rid himself of wife, son, mother, and father. The only thing they bequeathed to him was a fear of women. Tomas desired but feared them.



"Gentlemen, please! I'm sure we can all agree that both the rowing machine and the stationary bicycle have a place in any serious program of cardiovascular exercise."

Needing to create a compromise between fear and desire, he devised what he called "erotic friendship." He would tell his mistresses: the only relationship that can make both partners happy is one in which sentimentality has no place and neither partner makes any claim on the life and freedom of the other.

To insure that erotic friendship never grew into the aggression of love, he would meet each of his long-term mistresses only at intervals. He considered this method flawless and propagated it among his friends: "The important thing is to abide by the rule of threes. Either you see a woman three times in quick succession and then never again or you maintain relations over the years but make sure that the rendezvous are at least three weeks apart."

The rule of threes enabled Tomas to keep intact his liaisons with some women while continuing to engage in numerous short-term affairs with many others. He was not always understood. The woman who understood him best was Sabina. She was a painter. "The reason I like you," she would say to him, "is you're the complete opposite of kitsch. In the kingdom of kitsch you would be a monster."

It was Sabina he turned to when he needed to find a job for Tereza in Prague. Following the unwritten rules of erotic friendship, Sabina promised to do everything in her power, and before long she had in fact located a place for Tereza in the darkroom of an illustrated weekly. Although Tereza's new job did not require any particular qualifications, it raised her status from waitress to member of the press. When Sabina herself introduced Tereza to everyone on the weekly, Tomas knew he had never had a better friend as a mistress than Sabina.

6

THE unwritten contract of erotic friendship stipulated that Tomas should exclude all love from his life. The moment he violated that clause of the contract, his other mistresses would assume inferior status and become ripe for insurrection.

Accordingly, he rented a room for Tereza and her heavy suitcase. He wanted to be able to watch over her, protect her, enjoy her presence, but felt no need to change his way of life. He did not want word to get out that Tereza was sleeping at his place: spending the night together was the corpus delicti of love.

He never spent the night with the others. It was easy enough if he was at their place: he could leave whenever he pleased. It was worse when they were at his and he had to explain that come midnight he would have to drive them home because he was an insomniac and found it impossible to fall asleep in close proximity to another person. Though it was not far from the truth, he never dared tell them the whole truth: after making love he had an uncontrollable craving to be by himself; waking in the middle of the night at the side of an alien body was distasteful to him, rising in the morning with an intruder repellent; he had no desire to be overheard brushing his teeth in the bathroom, nor was he enticed by the thought of an intimate breakfast.

That is why he was so surprised to wake up and find Tereza squeezing his hand tightly. Lying there looking at her, he could not quite understand what had happened. But as he ran through the previous few hours in his mind, he began to sense an aura of hitherto unknown happiness emanating from them.

From that time on they both looked forward to sleeping together. I might even say that the goal of their lovemaking was not so much pleasure as the sleep that followed it. She especially was affected. Whenever she stayed overnight in her rented room (which quickly became only an alibi for Tomas), she was unable to fall asleep; in his arms she would fall asleep no matter how wrought up she might have been. He would whisper impromptu fairy tales about her, or gibberish—words he repeated monotonously, words soothing or comical that turned into vague visions lulling her through the first dreams of the night. He had complete control over her sleep: she dozed off at the second he chose.

While they slept, she held him as on the first night, keeping a firm grip on wrist, finger, or ankle. If he wanted to move without waking her, he had to resort to artifice. After freeing his finger (wrist, ankle) from her clutches, a process that, since she guarded him carefully even in her sleep, never failed to rouse her partially, he would calm her by slipping an object into her hand (a rolled-up pajama top, a slipper, a book), which she then gripped as tightly as if it were a part of his body.

Once, when he had just lulled her to sleep but she had gone no further than dream's antechamber and was therefore still responsive to him, he said to her, "Goodbye, I'm going now." "Where?" she asked in her sleep. "Away," he answered sternly. "Then

KISSING STIEGLITZ GOODBYE

Every city in America is approached
through a work of art, usually a bridge
but sometimes a road that curves underneath
or drops down from the sky. Pittsburgh
has a tunnel—

you don't know it—that takes you through
the rivers
and under the burning hills. I went there to cry
in the woods or carry my heavy bicycle
through fire and flood. Some have little parks—

San Francisco has a park. Albuquerque
is beautiful from a distance; it is purple
at five in the evening. New York is Egyptian,
especially from the little rise on the hill

at 14-C; it has twelve entrances,
like the body of Jesus, and Easton,
where I lived,
has two small floating bridges in front of it
that brought me in and out. I said goodbye

to them both when I was fifty-seven. I'm reading
Joseph Wood Krutch again—the second time.
I love how he lived in the desert. I'm looking
at the skull
of Georgia O'Keeffe. I'm kissing Stieglitz goodbye.

He was a city, Stieglitz was truly a city
in every sense of the word: he wore a library
across his chest; he had a church on his knees.
I'm kissing him goodbye; he was, for me,

the last true city; after him there were
only overpasses and shopping centers,
little enclaves here and there, a skyscraper
with nothing near it, maybe a meaningless turf

where whores couldn't even walk, where
nobody sits,
where nobody either lies or runs; either that,
or some pure desert: a lizard under a boojum,
a flower sucking the water out of a rock.

What is the life of sadness worth, the bookstores
lost, the drugstores buried, a man with a stick
turning the bricks up, numbering the shards,
dream twenty-one, dream twenty-two. I left

with a glass of tears, a little artistic vial.
I put it in my leather pockets next
to my flask of Scotch, my golden knife and my keys,
my joyful poems, and my T-shirts. Stieglitz is there

beside his famous number; there is smoke
and fire above his head; some bowlegged painter
is whispering in his ear; some lady-in-waiting
is taking down his words. I'm kissing Stieglitz

goodbye, my arms are wrapped around him,
his photos
are making me cry: we're walking down
Fifth Avenue;
we're looking for a pencil; there is a girl
standing against the wall—I'm shaking now

when I think of her; there are two buildings, one
is in blackness; there is a dying poplar;
there is a light on the meadow; there is man
on a sagging porch. I would have believed in everything.

—GERALD STERN

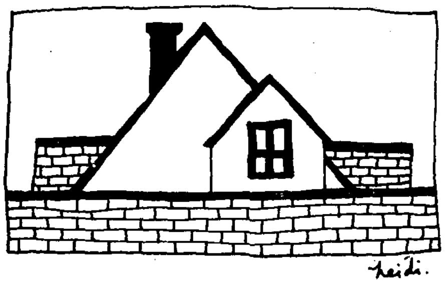
• •

I'm going with you," she said, sitting up in bed. "No, you can't. I'm going away for good," he said, going out into the hall. She stood up and followed him out, squinting. She was naked beneath her short nightdress. Her face was blank, expressionless, but she moved energetically. He walked through the hall of the flat into the hall of the building (the hall shared by all the occupants), closing the door in her face. She flung it open and continued to follow him, convinced in her dream that he meant to leave her for good and she had to stop him. He walked down the stairs to the first landing and waited for her there. She went down after him, took him by the hand, and led him back to bed.

Tomas came to this conclusion: Making love with a woman and sleeping with a woman are two separate passions, not merely different but opposite. Love makes itself felt not in the desire for copulation (a desire that extends to an infinite number of women) but in the desire for shared sleep (a desire limited to one woman).

7

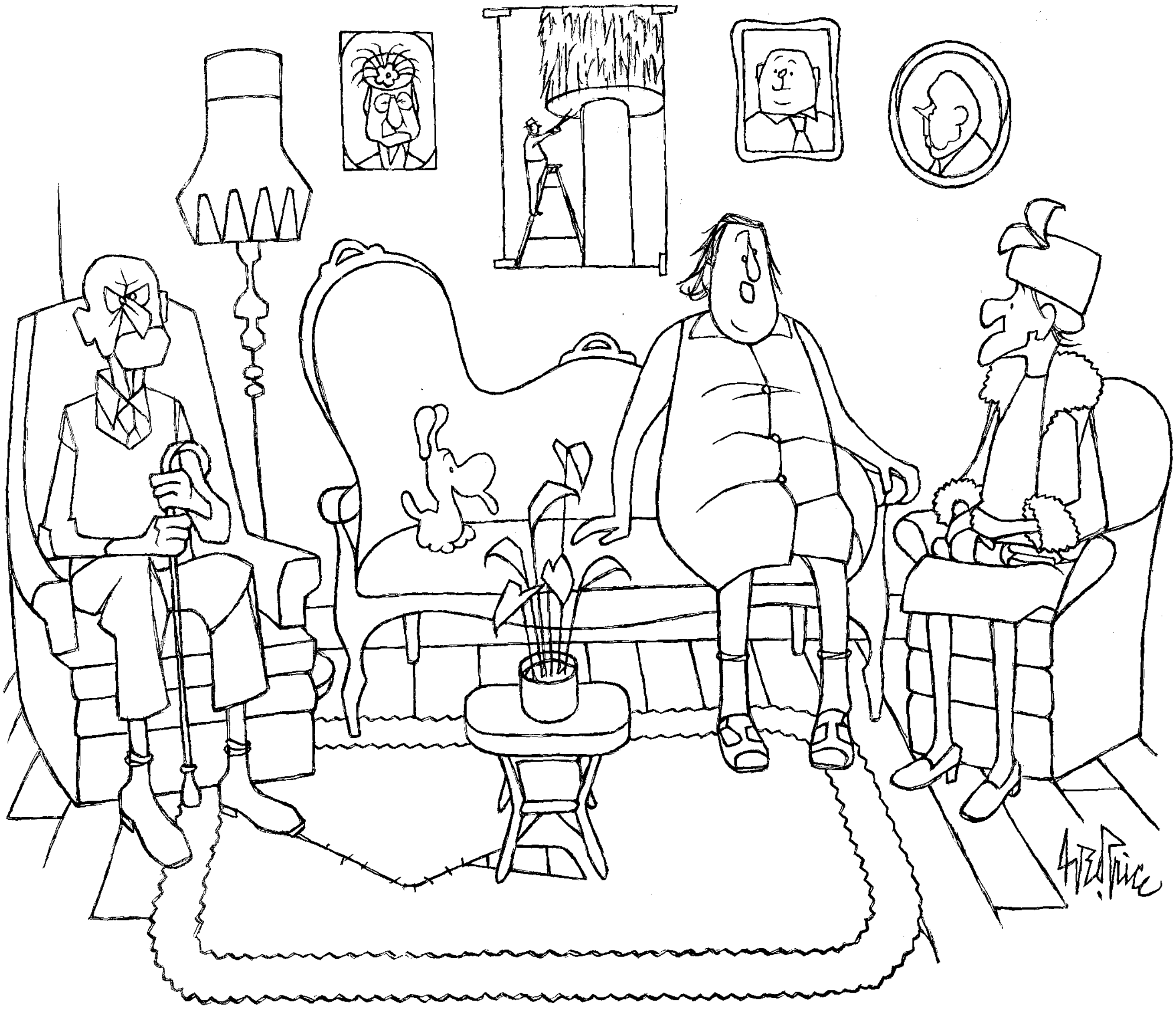
IN the middle of the night Tereza started moaning in her sleep. Tomas woke her up, but when she saw his face she said, with hatred in her voice, "Get away from me! Get away from me!" Then she told him her dream: The two of them and Sabina had been in a big room together. There was a bed in the middle of the room. It was like a platform in the theatre. Tomas ordered her to stand in the corner while he made love to Sabina. The sight of it caused Tereza intolerable suffering. Hoping to alleviate the pain in her heart by pains of the flesh, she jabbed needles under her fingernails. "It hurt so much," she said, squeezing her hands into fists as if they actually were wounded.



He pressed her to him, and she gradually (trembling violently for a long time) fell asleep in his arms.

Thinking about the dream the next day, he remembered something. He opened a desk drawer and took out a packet of letters Sabina had written to him. He was not long in finding the following passage: "I want to make love to you in my studio. It will be like a stage surrounded by people. The audience won't be allowed up close, but they won't be able to take their eyes off us."

The worst of it was that the letter was dated. It was quite recent, written



"Last March, he cancelled his subscription to the Hillsburgh 'Weekly Clarion.' Currently he is an irate member of the Necktie-of-the-Month Club."

• •

long after Tereza moved in with Tomas.

"So you've been rummaging in my letters!"

She did not deny it. "Throw me out, then!"

But he did not throw her out. He could picture her pressed against the wall of Sabina's studio jabbing needles up under her nails. He took her fingers between his hands and stroked them, brought them to his lips and kissed them, as if they still had drops of blood on them.

But from that time on everything seemed to conspire against him. Not a day went by without her learning something about his secret life.

At first he denied it all. Then, when the evidence became too blatant, he argued that his polygamous way of life did not in the least run counter to his love for her. He was inconsistent: first he disavowed his infidelities, then he tried to justify them.

Once as he was saying goodbye after making a date with a woman on the phone, from the next room came a strange sound like the loud chattering of teeth.

By chance, she had come home without his realizing it. She was pouring something from a medicine bottle down her throat, and her hand shook so badly the glass bottle clicked against her teeth.

He pounced on her as if trying to save her from drowning. The bottle fell to the floor, spotting the carpet with valerian drops. She put up a good fight, and he had to keep her in a straitjacket-like hold for a quarter of an hour before he could calm her.

He knew he was in an unjustifiable situation, based as it was on complete inequality.

One evening, before she discovered his letters from Sabina, they had gone to a bar with some friends to celebrate Tereza's new job. She had been promoted at the weekly from darkroom technician to staff photographer. Because he never was much for dancing, one of his younger colleagues took over. They made a splendid couple on the dance floor, and Tomas found her more beautiful than ever. He looked on in amazement at the split-second precision and deference with which Tereza anticipated her partner's

will. The dance seemed to him a declaration that her devotion, her ardent desire to satisfy his every whim, was not necessarily bound to his person, that if she hadn't met Tomas she would have been ready to respond to the call of any other man she might have met instead. He had no difficulty imagining Tereza and his young colleague as lovers. And the ease with which he arrived at this fiction wounded him. He realized that Tereza's body was perfectly thinkable coupled with any male body, and the thought put him in a foul mood. Not until late that night, at home, did he admit to her he was jealous.

This absurd jealousy, grounded as it was in mere hypothesis, proved that he considered her fidelity an unconditional postulate of their relationship. How then could he begrudge her her jealousy of his very real mistresses?

8

DURING the day, she tried (though with only partial success) to believe what Tomas told her and to be as cheerful as she had been before. But her jealousy thus tamed by day burst forth all the more savagely in her dreams, each of which ended in a wail he could silence only by waking her.

Her dreams recurred like themes and variations or episodes in a television series. For example, she repeatedly dreamed of cats jumping at her face and digging their claws into her skin. We need not look far for an interpretation: in Czech slang, the word "cat" means a pretty woman. Tereza saw herself threatened by women—all women. All women were potential mistresses for Tomas, and she feared them all.

In another cycle she was being sent to her death. Once, when he woke her as she screamed in terror in the dead of night, she told him about it. "I was at a large indoor swimming pool. There were about twenty of us. All women. We were naked and had to march around the pool. There was a pannier hanging from the ceiling and a man standing in the pannier. The man wore a broad-brimmed hat shading his face, but I could see it was you. You kept giving us orders. Shouting at us. We had to sing as we marched, sing and do knee bends. If one of us did a bad knee bend, you would shoot her with a pistol and she would fall dead into the pool. Which made everybody laugh and sing even louder. You never took your eyes off us, and the minute we did something wrong you would shoot. The pool was full of corpses floating just below the surface. And I knew I lacked the strength to do the next knee bend and you were going to shoot me!"

In a third cycle she was dead.

Lying in a hearse as big as a furniture van, she was surrounded by dead women. There were so many of them that the back door would not close and several legs dangled out.

"But I'm not dead!" Tereza cried. "I can still feel!"

"So can we," the corpses said, laughing.

They laughed the same laugh as the live women who used to tell her cheerfully that it was perfectly normal that one day she would have bad teeth, faulty ovaries, and wrinkles, because they all had bad teeth, faulty ovaries, and wrinkles. Laughing the same laugh, they told her that she was dead and it was perfectly all right!

Suddenly she felt a need to urinate. "You see," she cried. "I need to pee. That's proof positive I'm not dead!"

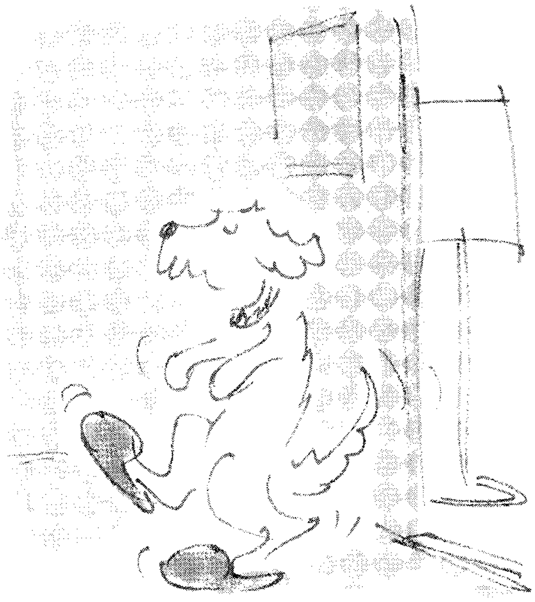
But they only laughed again. "Needing to pee is perfectly normal!" they said. "You'll go on feeling that kind of thing for a long time yet. Like a person who has an arm cut off and keeps feeling it's there. We may not have a drop of pee left in us, but we keep needing to pee."

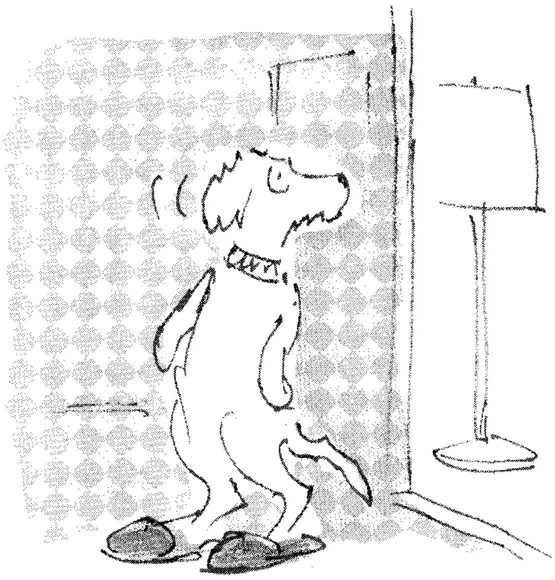
Tereza huddled against Tomas in bed. "And the way they talked to me! Like old friends, people who'd known me forever. I was appalled at the thought of having to stay with them forever."

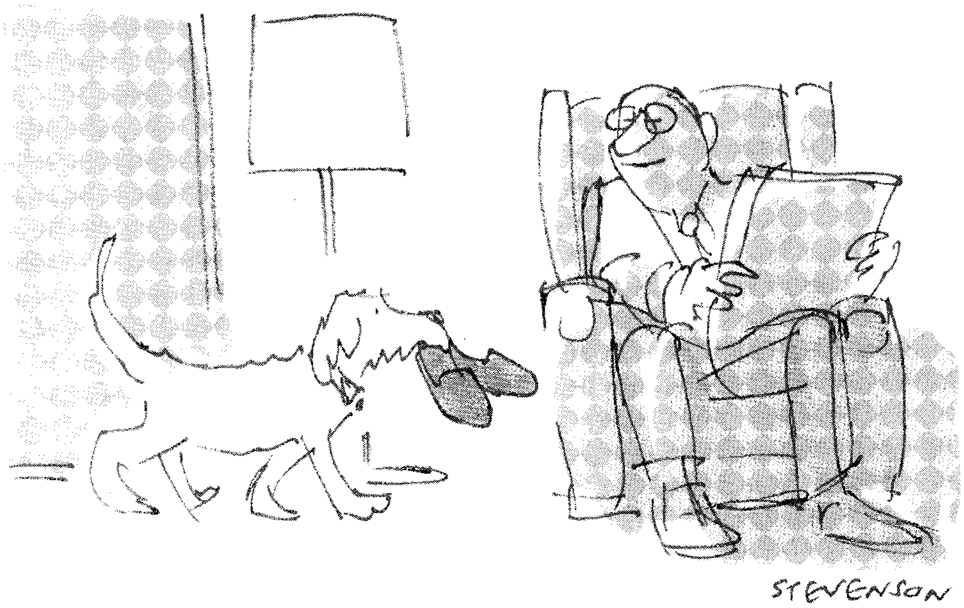
9

ALL languages that derive from Latin form the word "compassion" by combining the prefix meaning "with" (*com*) and the root meaning "suffering" (Late Latin, *passio*). In other languages—Czech, Polish, German, and Swedish, for instance—this word is formed by combining the prefix "with" and the word that means "feeling" (Czech, *sou-cit;* Polish, *wspót-czucie;* German, *Mit-gefühl;* Swedish, *med-känsla*).

In languages that derive from Latin, "compassion" means: we cannot look on coolly as others suffer; or, we sympathize with those who suffer. Another word with approximately the same meaning, "pity" (French, *pitié;* Italian, *pietà;* etc.), connotes a certain condescension toward the sufferer. "To take pity on a woman" means that we are better off than she, that we stoop to her level, lower ourselves.







That is why the word "compassion" generally inspires suspicion; it indicates what is considered an inferior, second-rate sentiment that has little to do with love. To love someone out of compassion means not really to love.

In languages that form the word "compassion" not from the root "suffering" but from the root "feeling," the word is used in almost the same way, but to contend that it indicates a bad or inferior sentiment is difficult. The secret strength of its etymology floods the word with another light and gives it a broader meaning: to have compassion (co-feeling) means not only to be able to tolerate the other's misfortune but also to feel with him any emotion—joy, anxiety, happiness, pain. This kind of compassion (in the sense of *soucit*, *współczucie*, *Mitgefühl*, *medkänsla*) therefore signifies the greatest degree of affective imagination, the art of emotional telepathy. In the hierarchy of sentiments, then, it is supreme.

By revealing to Tomas her dream about jabbing needles under her fingernails, Tereza unwittingly revealed that she had gone through his desk. If Tereza had been any other woman, Tomas would never have spoken to her again. Aware of that, Tereza said to him, "Throw me out!" But instead of throwing her out he seized her hand and kissed the tips of her fingers, because at that moment he himself felt the pain under her fingernails as surely as if the nerves of her fingers led straight to his own brain.

Anyone who has failed to benefit from the Devil's gift of compassion will condemn Tereza coldly for her deed, because privacy is sacred and drawers containing intimate correspondence are not to be opened. But because compassion was Tomas's fate (or curse), he felt that he himself had knelt before the open desk drawer, unable to tear his eyes from Sabina's letter. He understood Tereza, and not only was he incapable of being angry with her, he loved her all the more.

10

HER gestures grew abrupt and unsteady. Two years had elapsed since she discovered he was unfaithful, and things had grown worse. There was no way out.

Was he genuinely incapable of abandoning his erotic friendships? He was. It would have torn him apart. He lacked the strength to control his taste for other women. Besides, he failed to see the need. No one knew better than he how little his exploits threatened Tereza. Why, then, give them up? He saw no more reason for that than to deny himself soccer matches.

But was it still a matter of pleasure? Even as he set out to visit another woman, he found her distasteful and promised himself he would not see her again. He constantly had Tereza's image before his eyes, and the only way he could erase it was by quickly getting drunk. Ever since meeting Tereza, he had been unable to make love to other women without alcohol. But alcohol on his breath was a sure sign to Tereza of infidelity.

He was caught in a trap: even on his way to see them he found them distasteful, but one day without them and he was back on the phone, eager to make contact.

He still felt most comfortable with Sabina. He knew she was discreet and would not divulge their rendezvous. Her studio greeted him like a memento of his past, his idyllic bachelor past.

Perhaps he himself did not realize how much he had changed: he was now afraid to come home late, because Tereza would be waiting up for him. Then one day Sabina caught him glancing at his watch during intercourse and trying to hasten its conclusion.

Afterward, still naked and lazily walking across the studio, she stopped before an easel with a half-finished painting and watched him sidelong as he threw on his clothes.

When he was fully dressed except for one bare foot, he looked around the room and then got down on all fours to continue the search under a table.

"You seem to be turning into the theme of all my paintings," she said. "The meeting of two worlds. A double exposure. Showing through the outline of Tomas the libertine, incredibly, the face of a romantic lover. Or, the other way around, through a Tristan, always thinking of his Tereza, I see the beautiful, betrayed world of the libertine."

Tomas straightened up and distractedly listened to Sabina's words.

"What are you looking for?" she asked.

"A sock."

She searched all over the room with him, and again he got down on all fours to look under the table.

"Your sock isn't anywhere to be seen," said Sabina. "You must have come without it."

"How could I have come without it?" cried Tomas, looking at his watch. "I wasn't wearing only one sock when I came, was I?"

"It's not out of the question. You've been very absent-minded lately. Always rushing somewhere, looking at your watch. It wouldn't surprise me in the least if you forgot to put on a sock."

He was just about to put his shoe on his bare foot. "It's cold out," Sabina said. "I'll lend you one of my stockings."

She handed him a long white fashionable, wide-mesh stocking.

He knew very well she was getting back at him for glancing at his watch while making love to her. She had hidden his sock somewhere. It was indeed cold out, and he had no choice but to take her up on the offer. He went home wearing a sock on one foot and a wide-mesh stocking rolled down over his ankle on the other.

He was in a quandary: in his mistresses' eyes, he bore the stigma of his love for Tereza; in Tereza's eyes, the stigma of his exploits with the mistresses.

II

To assuage Tereza's suffering, he married her (they could finally get rid of the room, which she had not lived in for quite some time) and gave her a puppy.

It was born to a Saint Bernard owned by a colleague. The sire was a neighbor's German shepherd. No one wanted the little mongrels, and his colleague was loath to kill them.

Looking over the puppies, Tomas knew that the ones he rejected would have to die. He felt like the president of the republic standing before four prisoners condemned to death and empowered to pardon only one of them. At last he made his choice: a bitch whose body seemed reminiscent of the German shepherd and whose head came from its Saint Bernard mother. He took it home to Tereza, who picked it up and pressed it to her breast. The puppy immediately peed on her blouse.

Then they tried to come up with a name for it. Tomas wanted the name to be a clear indication that the dog was Tereza's, and he thought of the book she was clutching under her arm when she arrived unannounced in Prague. He suggested they call the puppy Tolstoy.

"It can't be Tolstoy," Tereza said. "It's a girl. How about Anna Karenina?"

"It can't be Anna Karenina," said Tomas. "No woman could possibly have so funny a face. It's much more like Karenin. Yes, Anna's husband. That's just how I've always pictured him."

"But won't calling her Karenin affect her sexuality?"

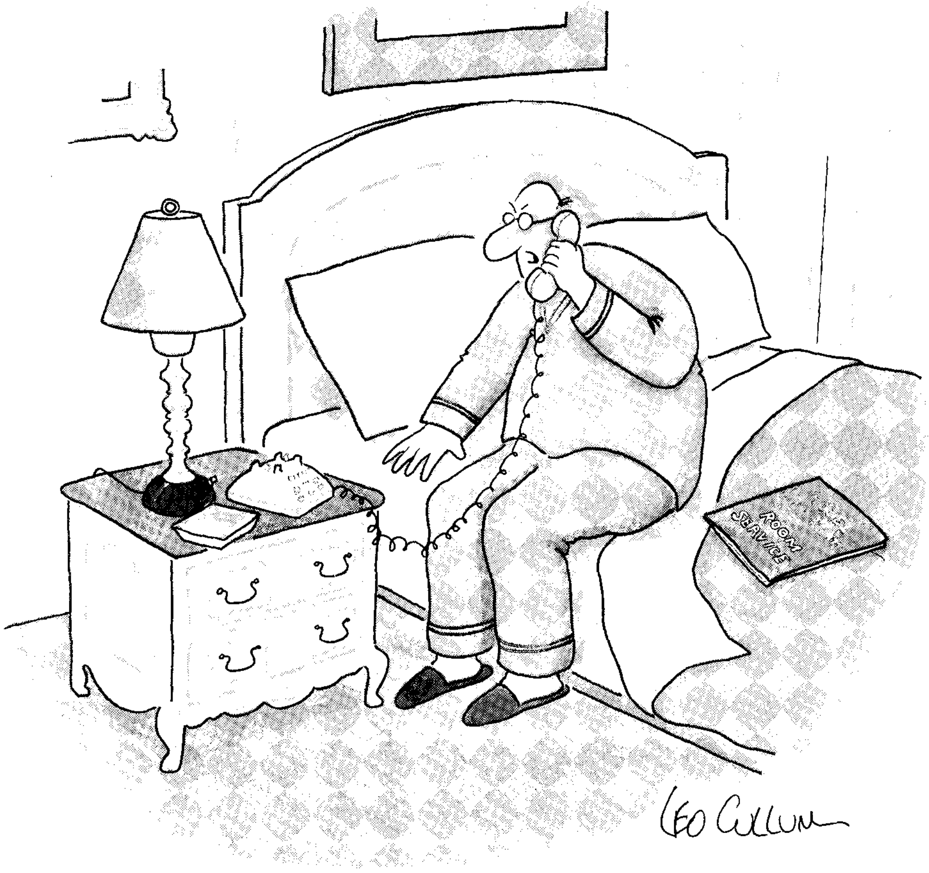
"It is entirely possible," said Tomas, "that a female dog addressed continually by a male name will develop lesbian tendencies."

Strangely enough, Tomas's words came true.

"If television didn't exist, it would probably have to be invented."

Though bitches are usually more affectionate to their masters than to their mistresses, Karenin proved an exception, deciding that he was in love with Tereza. Tomas was grateful to him for it. He would stroke the puppy's head and say, "Well done, Karenin! That's just what I wanted you for. Since I can't cope with her by myself, you must help me."

But even with Karenin's help Tomas failed to make Tereza happy. He became aware of his failure some years later, on approximately the tenth day after his country was occupied by Russian tanks. It was August of 1968, and Tomas was receiving daily phone calls from a hospital in Zurich. The director there, a physician who had struck up a friendship with Tomas at an international conference, was worried about him and kept offering him a job.



"Front desk? There are no little candies on my pillow."

• •

12

IF Tomas rejected the Swiss doctor's offer without a second thought, it was for Tereza's sake. He assumed she would not want to leave. She had spent the whole first week of the occupation in a kind of trance that almost resembled happiness. After roaming the streets with her camera, she would hand the rolls of film to foreign journalists, who actually fought over them. Once, when she went too far and took a closeup of an officer pointing his revolver at a group of people, she was arrested and kept overnight at Russian military headquarters. There they threatened to shoot her, but no sooner had they let her go than she was back in the streets with her camera.

That is why Tomas was surprised when, on the tenth day of the occupation, she said to him, "Why is it you don't want to go to Switzerland?"

"Why should I?"

"They could make it hard for you here."

"They can make it hard for anybody," replied Tomas with a wave of the hand. "What about you? Could you live abroad?"

"Why not?"

"You've been out there risking your life for this country. How can you be so nonchalant about leaving it?"

"Now that Dubček is back, things have changed," said Tereza.

It was true. The general euphoria had lasted no longer than the first week. The representatives of the country had been hauled away like criminals by the Russian Army, no one knew where they were, everyone feared for the men's lives, and hatred for the Russians drugged people like alcohol. It was a drunken carnival of hate. Czech towns were decorated with thousands of hand-painted posters bearing ironic texts, epigrams, poems, and cartoons of Brezhnev and his soldiers, jeered at by one and all as a circus of illiterates. But no carnival can go on forever. In the meantime, the Russians had forced the Czech representatives to sign a compromise agreement in Moscow. When Dubček returned with them to Prague, he gave a speech over the radio. He was so devastated after his six-day imprisonment he could hardly talk; he kept stuttering and gasping for breath, making long pauses between sentences, pauses lasting nearly thirty seconds.

The compromise saved the country from the worst: the executions and mass deportations to Siberia that had terrified everyone. But one thing was clear: the country would have to bow to the conqueror. Forever and ever, it will stutter, stammer, and gasp for air like Alexander Dubček. The carnival was over. Workaday humiliation had begun.

Tereza had explained all this to Tomas, and he knew that it was true. But he also knew that underneath it all hid still another, more fundamental truth, the reason she wanted to leave Prague: she had never really been happy before the carnival.

The days she walked through the streets of Prague taking pictures of Russian soldiers and looking danger in the face were the best of her life. They were the only time when the television series of her dreams had been interrupted and she had enjoyed a few happy nights. The Russians had brought equilibrium to her in their tanks, and now that the carnival was over she feared her nights again and wanted to escape them. She now knew there were conditions under which she could feel strong and fulfilled, and she longed to go off into the world and seek those conditions somewhere else.

"It doesn't bother you that Sabina has also emigrated to Switzerland?" Tomas asked.

"Geneva isn't Zurich," said Tereza. "She'll be much less of a difficulty there than she was in Prague."

A person who longs to leave the place where he lives is an unhappy person. That is why Tomas accepted

Tereza's wish to emigrate as the culprit accepts his sentence, and one day he and Tereza and Karenin found themselves in the largest city in Switzerland.

13

HE bought a bed for their empty flat (they had no money yet for other furniture) and threw himself into his work with the frenzy of a man of forty beginning a new life.

He made several telephone calls to Geneva. A show of Sabina's work had opened there by chance a week after the Russian invasion, and in a wave of sympathy for her tiny country Geneva's patrons of the arts bought up all her paintings.

"Thanks to the Russians, I'm a rich woman," she said, laughing into the telephone. She invited Tomas to come and see her new studio, and assured him it did not differ greatly from the one he had known in Prague.

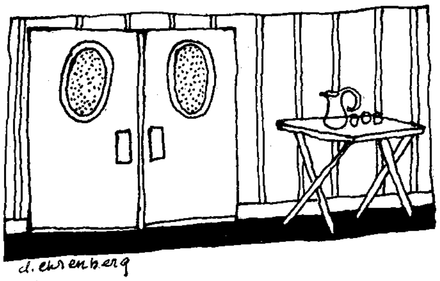
He would have been only too glad to visit her, but he was unable to find an excuse to explain his absence to Tereza. And so Sabina came to Zurich. She stayed at a hotel. Tomas went to see her after work. He phoned first from the reception desk, then went upstairs. When she opened the door, she stood before him on her beautiful long legs wearing nothing but panties and bra. And a black bowler hat. She stood there staring, mute and motionless. Tomas did the same. Suddenly he realized how touched he was. He removed the bowler from her head and placed it on the bedside table. Then they made love without saying a word.

Leaving the hotel for his flat (which by now had acquired a table, chairs, a couch, and a carpet), he thought happily that he carried his way of living with him as a snail carries his house. Tereza and Sabina represented the two poles of his life, separate and irreconcilable yet equally appealing.

But the fact that he carried his life-support system with him everywhere like a part of his body meant that Tereza went on having her dreams.

They had been in Zurich for six or seven months when he came home late one evening to find a letter on the table telling him she had left for Prague. She had left because she lacked the strength to live abroad. She knew she was supposed to bolster him up but did not know how to go about it. She had been silly enough to think that going abroad would change her. She thought that after what she had been through during the invasion she would stop being petty and grow up, grow wise and strong, but she had overestimated herself. She was weighing him down and would do so no longer. She had drawn the necessary conclusions before it was too late. And she apologized for taking Karenin with her.

He took some sleeping pills but still did not close his eyes until morning. Luckily it was Saturday and he could stay at home. For the hundredth and fiftieth time, he went over the situation: The borders between his country and the rest of the world were no longer open. No telegrams or telephone calls could bring her back. The authorities would never let her travel abroad. Her departure was staggeringly definitive.



14

THE realization that he was utterly powerless was like the blow of a sledgehammer, yet it was curiously calming as well. No one was forcing him into a decision. He felt no need to stare at the walls of the houses across the courtyard and ponder whether to live with her or not. Tereza had made the decision herself.

He went to a restaurant for lunch. He was depressed, but as he ate his original desperation waned, lost its strength, and soon all that was left was melancholy. Looking back on the years he had spent with Tereza, he

AN ANTIPASTORAL MEMORY OF ONE SUMMER

It is written that a single hurricane holds the power
to run our whole country for one year. Imagine
lights in Minnesota chicken coops, fire bells
ringing every borough of New York, dock pumps
spewing the bilge from Louisiana shrimpers,
the pulse that sends a voice from San Francisco
to Nagasaki where a woman wakes, folds and refolds
the American edition of news already forgotten.

Yet even in the dark silos of our countrymen who
practice graceful moves at the missile's panel
that is like a piano with the amazing, unplayed
notes not even Beethoven could hear into fusion,
no one dreams how to harness the storm for good.
That is why I think of two people at a bulkhead,
an old woman desperately pushing down the hem
of her flowered dress, holding a boy's small hand
where the waves they have come to see blossom

one after another, sluicing over their driven hair,
the salt sting so strong their eyes begin to swell,
until they fall back across the elegant Boulevard,
and even there the unexpected crescendos boom in
laces and strings of water radiant as new light.
The noise is unforgettable and deafening, the sea
keeps orchestrating, as if it means to address
all the preparations, the boarded windows, the dead

cars with their rain-blistered glass, the sidewalk
clotted now with seaweed like abandoned bodies.
That suddenly, then, the calm eye stalls on them,
a stillness like a lock with no key, a hand
hovering at a switch, waiting for music unheard,
and see—the woman turns, drags the boy brutally
past oaks older than them both, leaves this fall
blinking like lights trembling, limbs like spears,
two entering a powerless house to huddle, to pray
to the still God, though they call it hurricane.

—DAVE SMITH

• •

came to feel that their story could have had no better ending. If someone had invented the story, this is how he would have had to end it. One day, Tereza came to him uninvited. One day, she left the same way. She came with a heavy suitcase. She left with a heavy suitcase.

He paid the bill, left the restaurant, and started walking through the streets, his melancholy growing more and more beautiful. He had spent seven years of his life with Tereza, and now he realized that those years were more attractive in retrospect than when he was living them.

His love for Tereza was beautiful, but it was also tiring: he had constantly had to hide things from her, sham, dissemble, make amends, buck her up, calm her down, give her evidence of his feelings, play the defendant to her jealousy, her suffering, and her dreams, feel guilty, make excuses and apologies. Now what was tiring had disappeared and only the beauty remained.

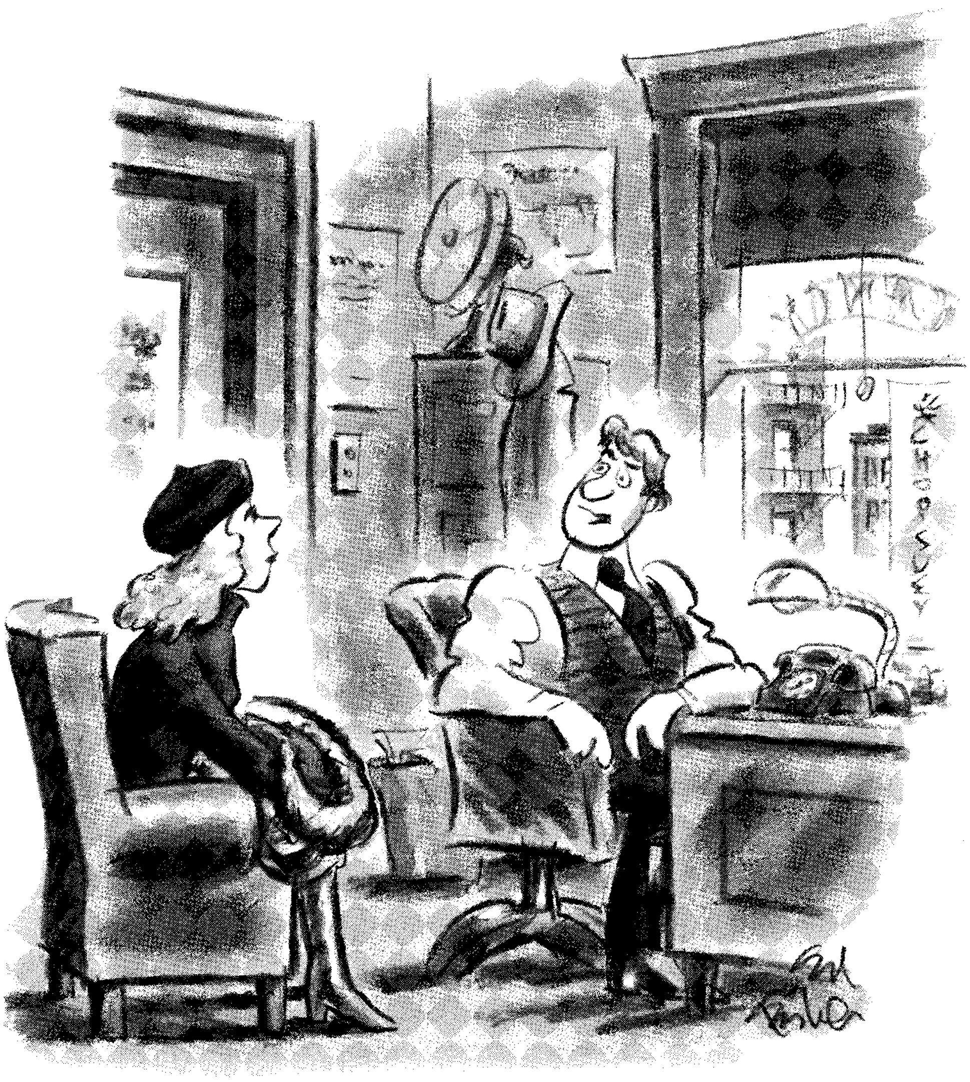
Saturday evening found him for the first time strolling alone through Zurich, breathing in the heady smell of his freedom. New adventures hid around each corner. The future was again a secret. He was on his way back to the bachelor life, the life he had once felt destined for, the life that would let him be what he actually was.

For seven years he had lived bound to her, his every step subject to her scrutiny. She might as well have chained iron balls to his ankles. Suddenly his step was much lighter. He soared. He had entered Parmenides' magic field: he was enjoying the sweet lightness of being.

(Did he feel like phoning Sabina in Geneva? Getting in touch with one or another of the women he had met during his months in Zurich? No, not in the least. Perhaps he sensed that any woman would make his memory of Tereza unbearably painful.)

15

THIS curious melancholic fascination lasted until Sunday evening. On Monday everything changed. Tereza forced her way into his thoughts: he imagined her sitting there writing her farewell letter; he felt her hands trembling; he saw her lugging her heavy suitcase in one hand and leading Karenin on his leash with the other; he pictured her unlocking their Prague flat, and suffered the utter abandonment breathing her in the face as she opened the door.



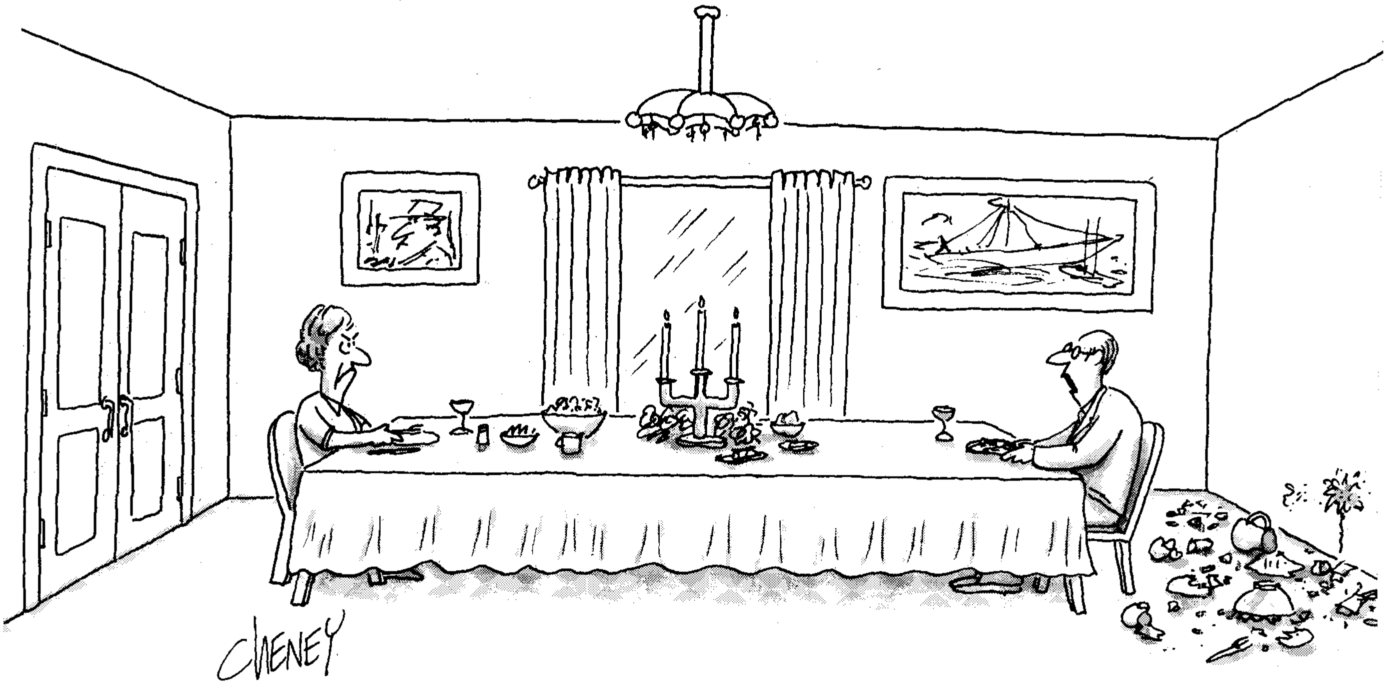
"I'm an old-fashioned private eye, Miss Jones. If this little mystery of yours has anything to do with computers, forget it."

During those two beautiful days of melancholy, his compassion had taken a holiday. It had slept the sound Sunday sleep of a miner who, after a hard week's work, needs to gather strength for his Monday shift.

Instead of the patients he was treating, Tomas saw Tereza. He tried to remind himself, Don't think about her! Don't think about her! He said to himself, "I'm sick with compassion. It's good that she's gone and that I'll never see her again, though it's not Tereza I need to be free of—it's that sickness, compassion, which I thought I was immune to until she infected me with it."

On Saturday and Sunday, he felt the sweet lightness of being rise up to him out of the depths of the future. On Monday he was hit by a weight the likes of which he had never known. The tons of steel of the Russian tanks were nothing compared with it. For there is nothing heavier than compassion. Not even one's own pain weighs so heavy as the pain one feels with someone, for someone, a pain intensified by the imagination and prolonged by a hundred echoes.

He kept warning himself not to give in to compassion, and compassion listened with bowed head and a seemingly guilty conscience. Compassion knew it was being presumptuous, yet it quietly stood its ground, and on the fifth day after her departure Tomas informed the director of his hospital (the man who had phoned him daily in Prague after the Russian invasion) that he had to return at once. He was ashamed. He knew that the move would appear irresponsible, inexcusable to the man. He had thought to unbosom himself and tell him the story of Tereza and the letter she had left on the table for him. But in the end he did not. From the Swiss doctor's point



"Would you please pass the salt, too?"

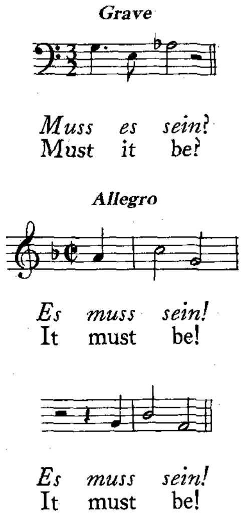
• •

of view, Tereza's move could only appear hysterical and abhorrent. And Tomas refused to allow anyone the opportunity to think ill of her.

The director of the hospital was in fact offended.

Tomas shrugged his shoulders and said, *"Es muss sein. Es muss sein."*

It was an allusion. The last movement of Beethoven's last quartet is based on the following two motifs:



To make the meaning of the words absolutely clear, Beethoven introduced the movement with a phrase, *"der schwer gefasste Entschluss,"* which is commonly translated as "the difficult resolution."

This allusion to Beethoven was actually Tomas's first step back to Tereza, because she was the one who had induced him to buy records of the Beethoven quartets and sonatas.

The allusion was even more pertinent than he had thought, because the Swiss doctor was a great music lover. Smiling serenely, he asked, in the melody of Beethoven's motif, *"Muss es sein?"*

"Ja, es muss sein!" Tomas said again.

16

UNLIKE Parmenides, Beethoven apparently viewed weight as something positive. Since the German word *"schwer"* means both "difficult" and "heavy," Beethoven's "difficult resolution" may also be construed as a "heavy resolution" or a "weighty resolution." The weighty resolution is at one with the voice of Fate (*"Es muss sein!"*); necessity, weight, and value are three concepts inextricably bound together: necessity is heavy, and only what is heavy has value.

This is a conviction born of Beethoven's music, and although we cannot ignore the possibility (or even probability) that it owes its origin more to Beethoven's commentators than to Beethoven himself, we all more or less share it: we believe that the greatness of man stems from the fact that he bears his fate as Atlas bore the heavens on his shoulders. Beethoven's hero is a lifter of metaphysical weights.

Tomas approached the Swiss border. I imagine a gloomy, shock-headed Beethoven personally conducting the local firemen's brass band in a farewell to emigration, an "Es Muss Sein" march.

Then Tomas crossed the Czech border and was welcomed by columns of Russian tanks. He had to stop his car and wait half an hour before they passed. A terrifying soldier in the black uniform of the armored forces stood at the crossroads directing traffic as if every road in the country belonged to him and him alone.

"Es muss sein!" Tomas repeated to himself, but then he began to doubt. Did it really have to be?

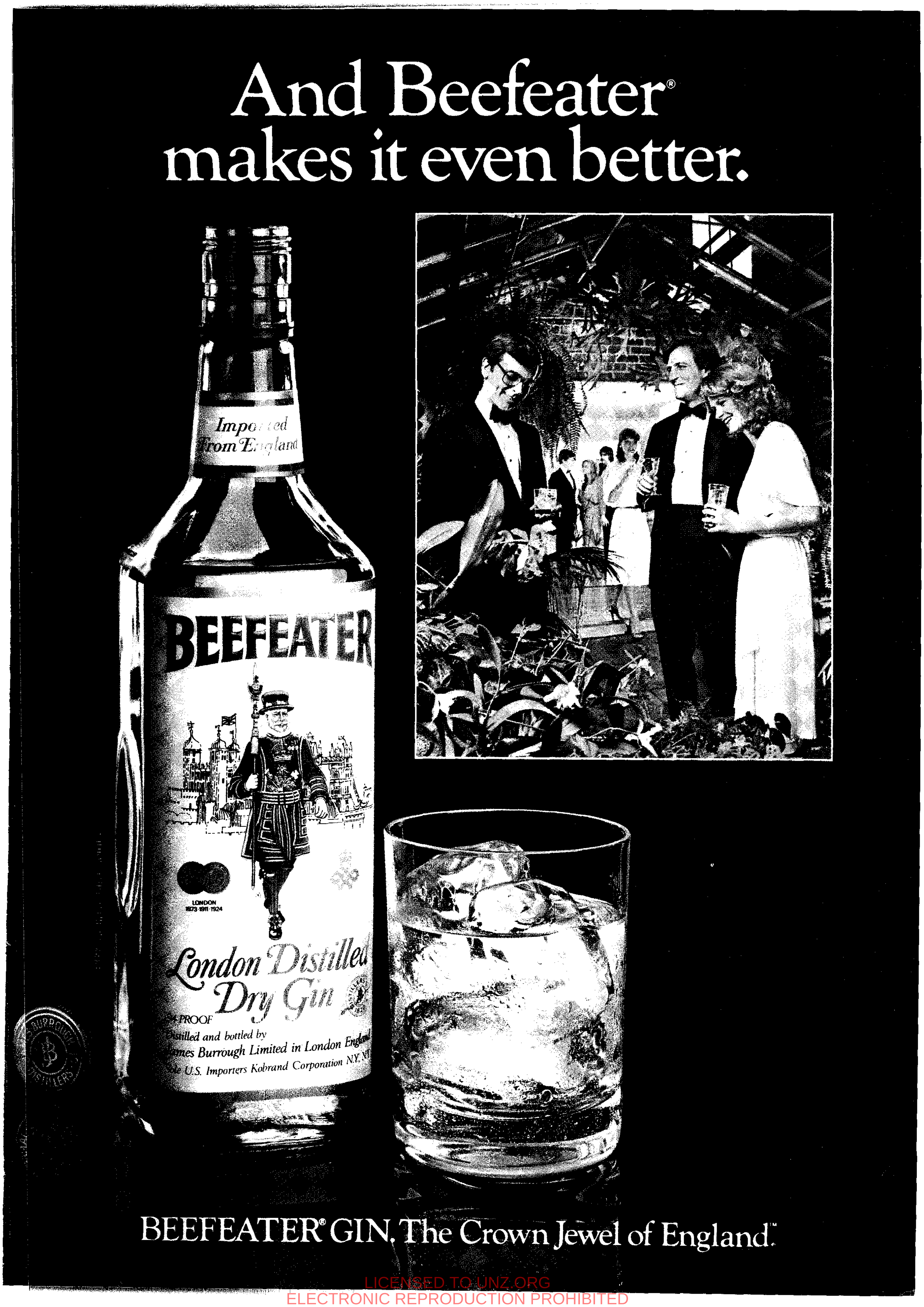
Yes, it was unbearable for him to stay in Zurich imagining Tereza living on her own in Prague.

But how long would he have been tortured by compassion? All his life? A year? Or a month? Or only a week?

How could he have known? How could he have gauged it?

Any schoolboy can do experiments in the physics laboratory to test various scientific hypotheses. But man, because he has only one life to live, cannot conduct experiments to test whether to follow his passion (compassion) or not.

It was with these thoughts in mind that Tomas opened the door to his flat. Karenin made the homecoming easier by jumping up on him and licking his face. The desire to fall into Tereza's arms (he could still feel it while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NOBODY STAYS JUST ONCE

Boston Houston Montreal New York San Francisco getting into his car in Zurich) had completely disintegrated. He fancied himself standing opposite her in the midst of a snowy plain, the two of them shivering from the cold.

17

FROM the very beginning of the occupation, Russian military airplanes had flown over Prague all night long. Tomas, no longer accustomed to the noise, was unable to fall asleep.

Twisting and turning beside the slumbering Tereza, he recalled something she had told him a long time before in the course of an insignificant conversation. They had been talking about his friend Z when she announced, "If I hadn't met you, I'd certainly have fallen in love with him."

Even then, her words had left Tomas in a strange state of melancholy, and now he realized it was only a matter of chance that Tereza loved him and not his friend Z. Apart from her consummated love for Tomas, there were, in the realm of possibility, an infinite number of unconsummated loves for other men.

We all reject out of hand the idea that the love of our life may be something light, or weightless; we presume that our love is what must be, that without it our life would no longer be the same; we feel that Beethoven himself, gloomy and awe-inspiring, is playing the "*Es muss sein*" to our own great love.

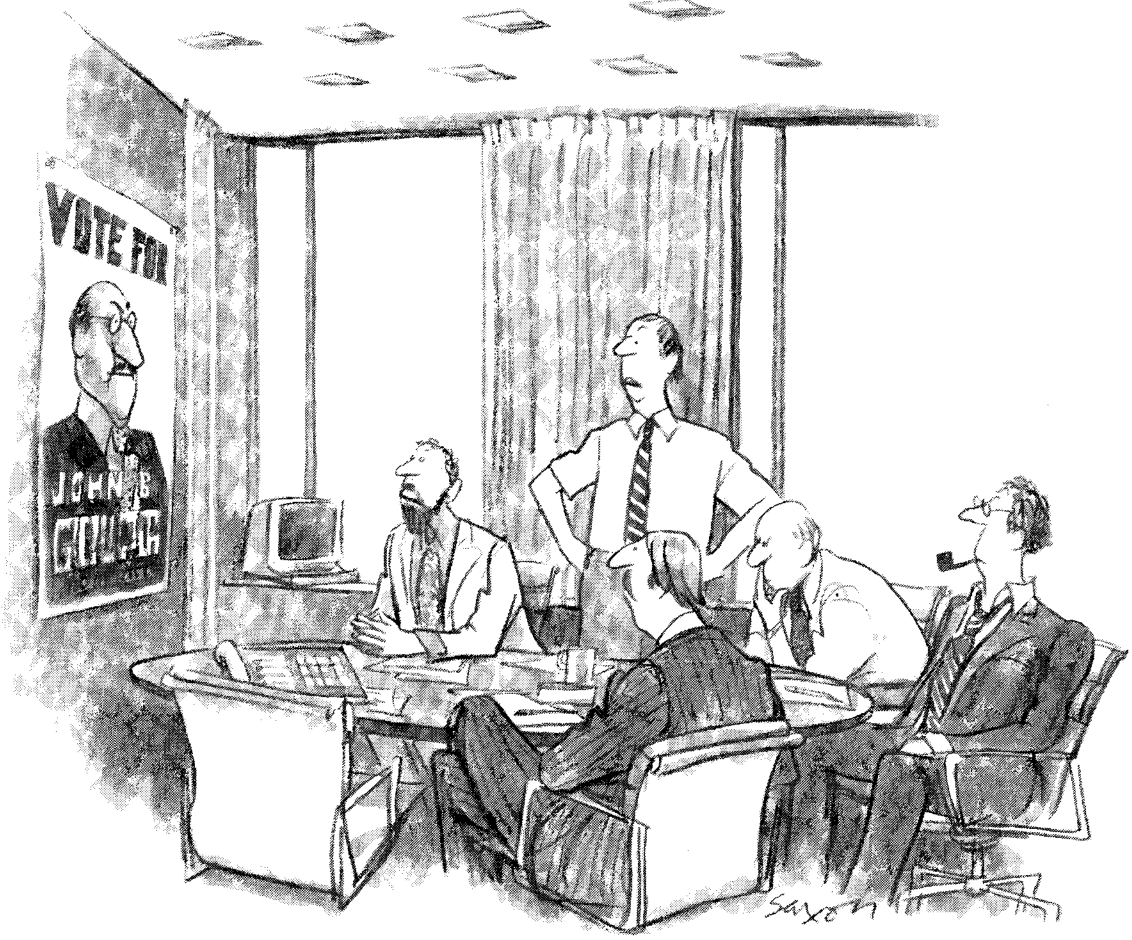
Tomas often thought of Tereza's remark about his friend Z, and came to the conclusion that the love story of his life exemplified not "*Es muss sein*" but, rather, "*Es könnte auch anders sein*," or "It could just as well be otherwise."

Seven years earlier, a complicated neurological case happened to have been discovered at the hospital in Tereza's town. They called in for consultation the chief surgeon of Tomas's hospital in Prague, but the chief surgeon happened to be suffering from sciatica, and because he could not move he sent Tomas in his place. The town had several hotels, but Tomas happened to be given a room in the one where Tereza was employed. He happened to have had enough free time before his train left to stop at the hotel restaurant. Tereza happened to be on duty, and happened to be serving Tomas's table. It had taken six chance happenings to push Tomas toward Tereza, as if he would have had little inclination to go to her on his own.

He had gone back to Prague because of her. So fateful a decision resting on so fortuitous a love, a love that would not even have existed had it not been for the chief surgeon's sciatica seven years earlier! And that woman, that personification of absolute fortuity, now again lay asleep beside him, breathing deeply.

It was late at night. His stomach started acting up, as it tended to do in times of psychic stress.

Once or twice her breathing turned into mild snores. Tomas felt no compassion. All he felt was the pressure in his stomach and the despair of having returned.



"The question is: Which of his irritating mannerisms can be used to political advantage?"

• •

SOUL AND BODY

1

THE first time Tereza went to Tomas's flat, her insides began to rumble. And no wonder: she had had nothing to eat since breakfast but a quick sandwich on the platform before boarding the train. She had concentrated on the daring journey ahead of her and forgotten about food. But when we ignore the body we are more easily victimized by it. She felt terrible standing there in front of Tomas listening to her belly speak out. She felt like crying. Fortunately, after the first ten seconds, Tomas put his arms around her and made her forget her ventral voices.

2

THE situation brutally reveals the irreconcilable duality of body and soul, that fundamental human experience.

A long time ago, man would listen

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in amazement to the sound of regular beats in his chest, never suspecting what they were. He was unable to identify himself with so alien and unfamiliar an object as the body. The body was a cage, and inside that cage was something that looked, listened, feared, thought, and marvelled; that something, that remainder left over after the body had been accounted for, was the soul.

Today, of course, the body is no longer unfamiliar: we know that the beating in our chest is the heart and that the nose is the nozzle of a hose sticking out of the body to take oxygen to the lungs. The face is nothing but an instrument panel registering all the body mechanisms: digestion, sight, hearing, respiration, thought.

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Ever since man has learned to give each part of the body a name, the body has given him less trouble. He has also learned that the soul is nothing more than the gray matter of the brain in action. The old duality of body and soul has become shrouded in scientific terminology, and we can laugh at it as merely an obsolete prejudice.

But just make someone who has fallen in love listen to his stomach rumble, and the unity of body and soul, that lyrical illusion of the age of science, instantly fades away.

3

TEREZA tried to see herself through her body. That is why, from girlhood on, she would stand before the mirror so often. And because she was afraid her mother would catch her at it, every peek into the mirror had a tinge of secret vice.

It was not vanity that drew her to the mirror; it was amazement at seeing her own "I." She forgot she was looking at the instrument panel of her body mechanisms; she thought she saw her soul shining through the features of her face. She forgot that the nose was merely the nozzle of a hose that took oxygen to the lungs; she saw it as the true expression of her nature.

Staring at herself for long stretches of time, she was occasionally upset at the sight of her mother's features in her face. She would stare all the more doggedly at her image in an attempt to wish them away and keep only what was hers alone. Each time she succeeded was a time of intoxication: her soul would rise to the surface of her body like a crew charging up from the bowels of a ship, spreading out over the deck, waving at the sky, and singing in jubilation.

4

SHE took after her mother, and not only physically. I sometimes have the feeling that her entire life was merely a continuation of her mother's, much as the course of a ball on the billiard table is merely the continuation of the player's arm movement.

Where and when did it begin, the movement that later turned into Tereza's life?

Perhaps at the time when Tereza's grandfather, a Prague businessman, began extolling the beauty of his daughter, Tereza's mother, for all to hear. When she was three or four, he would tell her she was the image of Raphael's Madonna. Tereza's four-year-old mother never forgot it. When as an adolescent she sat at her desk in school, she would not listen to the teachers; she would think about which paintings she was like.

Then came the time for her to marry. She had nine suitors. They all knelt round her in a circle. Standing in the middle like a princess, she did not know which one to choose. One was the handsomest, another the wittiest, the third was the richest, the fourth the most athletic, the fifth from the best family, the sixth recited verse, the seventh travelled widely, the eighth played the violin, and the ninth was the most manly. But they all knelt in the same way, they all had the same calluses on their knees.

The reason she finally chose the ninth was not so much that he was the most manly as that when she whispered, "Be careful, very careful," to him during their lovemaking he was purposely careless, and she had to marry him after failing to find a doctor willing to perform an abortion. And so Tereza was born. Numerous relatives gathered from all corners of the country to lean over the pram and talk baby talk. Tereza's mother talked no baby talk. She did not talk at all. She thought about the eight other suitors, all of whom seemed better than the ninth.

Like her daughter, Tereza's mother frequently looked in the mirror. One day she discovered wrinkles near her eyes and decided her marriage made no sense. At about that time she met an unmanly man who had several charges of fraud on his record, not to mention two failed marriages. Now she hated those suitors with their callused knees. She had a passionate desire to be the one to kneel for a change. She went down on her knees before her new swindler friend and left her husband and Tereza to fend for themselves.

The most manly of men became the most downcast. He became so downcast that nothing meant anything to him anymore. He said openly what was on his mind, and the Communist police, shocked by his rash statements, arrested him, brought him to trial, and sentenced him to a long term in prison. They closed up his flat and sent Tereza to stay with her mother.

The most downcast of men died after a short spell behind bars, and Tereza and her mother went to live in a small town near the mountains with her mother's swindler. The swindler worked in an office, her mother in a shop. Her mother gave birth to three more children. Then she looked in the mirror again and discovered she was old and ugly.

5

WHEN Tereza's mother realized she had lost everything, she initiated a search for the culprit. Anyone would do: her first husband, manly and unloved, who had failed to heed her whispered warning; her second husband, unmanly and much loved, who had dragged her away from Prague to a small town and kept her in a state of permanent jealousy by going through one woman after another. But she was powerless against either. The only person who belonged to her and had no means of escape, the hostage who could do penance for all the culprits, was Tereza.

Indeed, was she not the principal culprit determining her mother's fate? She, the absurd encounter of the sperm of the most manly of men and the egg of the most beautiful of women? Yes, it was in that fateful second, which was named Tereza, that the botched long-distance race, her mother's life, had begun.

Tereza's mother never stopped reminding her that being a mother meant sacrificing everything. Her words had the ring of truth, backed as they were by the experience of a woman who had lost everything because of her child. Tereza would listen and believe that being a mother was the highest value in life and that being a mother was a great sacrifice. If a mother was sacrifice personified, then being a daughter was guilt, with no possibility of redress.

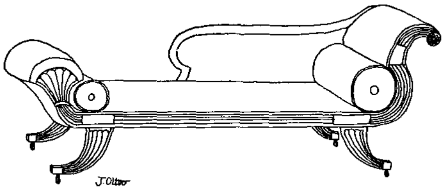
6

OF course, Tereza did not know the story of the night when her mother whispered "Be careful" into the ear of her father. Her guilty conscience was as vague as original sin. But she did what she could to rid herself of it. Her mother took her out of school at the age of fifteen, and Tereza went to work as a waitress, handing over all her earnings. She was willing to do anything to gain her mother's love. She ran the household, took care of her siblings, and spent all day Sunday cleaning house and doing the family wash. It was a pity, because she had been the brightest in her class. She yearned for something higher, but in the small town there was nothing higher for her. Whenever she did the clothes, she kept a book next to the tub. As she turned the pages, the wash water dripped all over them.

At home there was no such thing as shame. Her mother marched about in the flat in her underwear, sometimes braless and sometimes, on summer days, stark naked. Her stepfather did not walk about naked, but he did go into the bathroom every time Tereza was in the bath. Once, she locked herself in and her mother was furious. "Who do you think you are, anyway? Do you think he's going to bite off a piece of your beauty?"

(Hatred for her daughter obviously outweighed suspicion of her husband. Her daughter's guilt was infinite and included the husband's infidelities. Tereza's desire to be emancipated and insist on her rights—like the right to lock herself in the bathroom—was more objectionable to Tereza's mother than the possibility of her husband's taking a prurient interest in Tereza.)

Once, her mother decided to go naked in the winter when the lights were on. Tereza quickly ran to pull the curtains so that no one could see her from across the street. She heard her mother's laughter behind her. The following day her mother had some friends over: a neighbor, a woman she worked with, a local schoolmistress, and two or three other women in the habit of getting together regularly. Tereza and the sixteen-year-old son of one of them came in at one point to say hello, and her mother immediately took advantage of their presence to tell how Tereza had tried to protect her mother's modesty. She laughed, and all the women laughed with her. "Tereza can't reconcile herself to the idea that the human body pisses and breaks wind," she said. Tereza turned bright red, but her mother would not stop. "What's so terrible about that?" and in answer to her own question she broke wind loudly. All the women laughed again.



7

TEREZA'S mother blew her nose noisily, talked to people in public about her sex life, and enjoyed demonstrating her false teeth. She was remarkably skillful at loosening them with her tongue, and in the midst of a broad smile would cause the uppers to drop down over the lowers in such a way as to give her face a sinister expression.

Her behavior was but a single grand gesture, a casting off of youth and beauty. In the days when she had had nine suitors kneeling round her in a circle, she guarded her nakedness apprehensively, as though trying to express the value of her body in terms of the modesty she accorded it. Now she had not only lost that modesty, she had radically broken with it, ceremoniously using her new immodesty to draw a dividing line through her life and proclaim that youth and beauty were overrated and worthless.

Tereza appears to me a continuation of the gesture by which her mother cast off her life as a young beauty, cast it far behind her.

(And if Tereza has a nervous way of moving, if her gestures lack a certain easy grace, we must not be surprised: her mother's grand, wild, and self-destructive gesture has left an indelible imprint on her.)

8

TEREZA'S mother demanded justice. She wanted to see the culprit penalized. That is why she insisted that her daughter remain with her in the world of immodesty, where youth and beauty mean nothing, where the world is nothing but a vast concentration camp of bodies, one like the next, with souls invisible.

Now we can better understand the meaning of Tereza's secret vice, her long looks and frequent glances in the mirror. It was a battle with her mother. It was a longing to be a body unlike other bodies, to find that the surface of her face reflected the crew of the soul charging up from belowdecks. It was not an easy task: her soul—her sad, timid, self-effacing soul—lay concealed in the depths of her bowels, and was ashamed to show itself.

So it was the day she first met Tomas. Weaving its way through the drunks in the hotel restaurant, her body sagged under the weight of the beers on the tray, and her soul lay somewhere at the level of the stomach or pancreas. Then Tomas called to her. That call meant a great deal, because it came from someone who knew neither her mother nor the drunks with their daily stereotypically scabrous remarks. His outsider status raised him above the rest.

Something else raised him above the others as well: he had an open book on his table. No one had ever opened a book in that restaurant before. In Tereza's eyes, books were the emblems of a secret brotherhood. For she had but a single weapon against the world of crudity surrounding her: the books she took out of the municipal library, and, above all, the novels. She had read any number of them, from Fielding to Thomas Mann. They not only offered the possibility of an imaginary escape from a life she found unsatisfying; they also had meaning for her as physical objects: she loved to walk down the street with a book under her arm. It had the same significance for her as an elegant cane for the dandy a century ago. It differentiated her from others.

(Comparing the book to the elegant cane of the dandy is not absolutely precise. A dandy's cane did more than make him different; it made him modern and up to date. The book made Tereza different, but old-fashioned. Of course, she was too young to see how old-fashioned she looked to others. The young men walking by with transistor radios pressed to their ears seemed silly to her. It never occurred to her they were modern.)

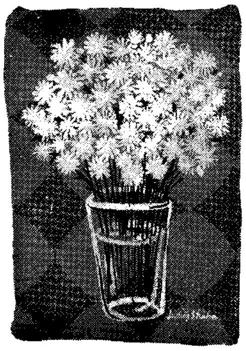
And so the man who called to her was simultaneously a stranger and a member of the secret brotherhood. He called to her in a kind voice, and Tereza felt her soul rushing up to the surface through her blood vessels and pores to show itself to him.

9

AFTER Tomas had returned to Prague from Zurich, he began to feel uneasy at the thought that his acquaintance with Tereza was the result of six improbable fortuities.

But is not an event in fact more significant and noteworthy the greater the number of fortuities necessary to bring it about?

Chance and chance alone has a message for us. Everything that occurs out of necessity, everything expected, repeated day in and day out, is mute. Only chance can speak to us. We read its message much as gypsies read the images made by coffee grounds at the bottom of a cup.



Tomas appeared to Tereza in the hotel restaurant as chance in the absolute. There he sat, poring over an open book, when suddenly he raised his eyes to her, smiled, and said, "A cognac, please."

At that moment, the restaurant radio happened to be playing music. On her way behind the counter to pour the cognac, Tereza turned the volume up. She recognized Beethoven. She had known him from the time a string quartet from Prague had visited her town. Tereza (who, as we know, yearned for "something higher") went to the concert. The hall was nearly empty. The only other people in the audience were the local pharmacist and his wife. And although the quartet of musicians onstage faced only a trio of listeners down below, they were kind enough not to cancel the concert, and gave a private performance of the last three Beethoven quartets.

Then the pharmacist invited the musicians to dinner and asked the girl in the audience to come along with them. From then on, Beethoven became Tereza's image of the world on the other side, the world she yearned for. Rounding the counter with Tomas's cognac, she tried to read chance's message: How was it possible that at the very moment she was taking an order of cognac for a stranger she found attractive, at that very moment she heard Beethoven?

Necessity knows no magic formulas—they are all left to chance. If a love is to be unforgettable, fortuities must immediately start fluttering down to it like birds to Francis of Assisi's shoulders.

10

HE called her back to pay for the cognac. He closed his book (the emblem of the secret brotherhood), and she thought of asking him what he was reading.

"Can you have it charged to my room?" he asked.

"Yes," she said. "What number are you in?"

He showed her his key, which was attached to a piece of wood with a red 6 drawn on it.

"That's odd," she said. "Six."

"What's so odd about that?" he asked.

She had suddenly recalled that the house where they had lived in Prague before her parents were divorced was No. 6. But she answered something else (which we may credit to her wiles): "You're in Room Six, and my shift ends at six."

"Well, my train leaves at seven," said the stranger.

She did not know how to respond, so she gave him the bill for his signature and took it over to the reception desk. When she finished work, the stranger was no longer at his table. Had he understood her discreet message? She left the restaurant in a state of excitement.

Opposite the hotel was a barren little park, as wretched as only the park of a dirty little town can be. But for Tereza it had always been an island of beauty: it had grass, four poplars, benches, a weeping willow, and a few forsythia bushes.

He was sitting on a yellow bench that afforded a clear view of the restaurant entrance. The very same bench she had sat on the day before with a book in her lap! She knew then (the birds of fortuity had begun alighting on her shoulders) that this stranger was her fate. He called out to her, invited her to sit next to him. (The crew of her soul rushed up to the deck of her body.) Then she walked him to the station, and he gave her his card as a farewell gesture. "If ever you should happen to come to Prague . . ."

11

MUCH more than the card he slipped her at the last minute, it was the call of all those fortuities (the book, Beethoven, the number six, the yellow park bench) which gave her the courage to leave home and to change her fate. It may well have been those few fortuities (quite modest, by the way—even drab; just what one would expect from so lacklustre a town) which set her love in motion and provided her with a source of energy she had still not yet exhausted at the end of her days.

Our day-to-day life is bombarded with fortuities—or, to be more precise, with the accidental meetings of people and events we call coincidences. "Coincidence" means the unexpected happening of two events at the same time—they meet: Tomas appears in the hotel restaurant at the same time the radio is playing Beethoven. We do not even notice the great majority of such coincidences. If the seat Tomas occupied had been occupied instead by the local butcher, Tereza never would have noticed that the radio was playing Beethoven (though the meeting of Beethoven and the butcher would also have been an interesting coincidence). But her nascent love inflamed her sense of beauty, and she would never forget that music. Whenever she heard it, she would be touched. Everything going on around her at that moment would be haloed by the music and take on its beauty.

Early in the novel that Tereza clutched under her arm when she went to visit Tomas, Anna meets Vronsky under curious circumstances: they are at the railway station when someone is run over by a train. At the end of the novel Anna throws herself under a train. This symmetrical composition—the same motif appears at the beginning and at the end—may seem quite "novelistic" to you, and I am willing to agree, but only on condition that you refrain from reading such notions as "fictive," "fabricated," and "untrue to life" into the word "novelistic." Because human lives are composed in precisely such a fashion.

They are composed like music. Guided by his sense of beauty, an individual transforms a fortuitous occurrence (Beethoven's music, death under a train) into a motif, which then assumes a permanent place in the composition of the individual's life. Anna could have chosen another way to take her life. But the motif of death and the railway station, unforgettably bound up with the birth of love, enticed her in her hour of despair with its dark beauty. Without realizing it, the individual composes his life according to the laws of beauty even in times of greatest distress.

It is wrong, then, to chide the novel for being fascinated by mysterious coincidences (like the meeting of Anna, Vronsky, the railway station, and death, or the meeting of Tomas, Tereza, Beethoven, and the cognac), but it is right to chide man for being blind to such coincidences in his daily life. For he thereby deprives his life of a dimension of beauty.

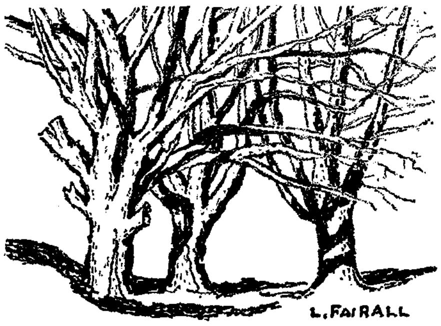
12

IMPELLED by the birds of fortuity fluttering down on her shoulders, she took a week's leave and, without a word to her mother, boarded the train to Prague. During the journey, Tereza made frequent trips to the toilet to look in the mirror and beg her soul not to abandon the deck of her body for a moment on this most crucial day of her life. Scrutinizing herself on one such trip, she had a sudden scare: she felt a scratch in her throat. Could she be coming down with something on this most crucial day of her life?

But there was no turning back. So she phoned him from the station, and the moment he opened the door her stomach started rumbling terribly. She was mortified. She felt as though she were carrying her mother in her stomach and her mother had guffawed to spoil her meeting with Tomas.

For the first few seconds she was afraid he would throw her out because of the crude noises she was making, but then he put his arms around her. She was grateful to him for ignoring her rumbles and kissed him passionately, her eyes misting. Before the first minute was up, they were making love. She screamed while making love. She had a fever by then. She had come down with the flu. The nozzle of the hose supplying oxygen to the lungs was stuffed up and red.

When she travelled to Prague a second time, it was with a heavy suitcase. She had packed all her things, determined never again to return to the small town. He had invited her to come to his place the following evening. That night she had slept in a cheap hotel. In the morning she carried her heavy suitcase to the station, left it there, and roamed the streets of Prague the whole day with "Anna Karenina" under her arm. Not even after she rang the doorbell and he opened the door would she part with it. It was like a ticket into Tomas's world. She realized that she had nothing but that miserable ticket, and the thought brought her nearly to tears. To keep from crying, she talked too much and too loudly, and she laughed. And again he took her in his arms almost at once and they made love. She had entered a mist in which nothing could be seen and only her scream could be heard.



13

IT was no sigh, no moan; it was a real scream. She screamed so loud that Tomas had to turn his head away from her face, afraid that her voice so close to his ear would rupture his eardrum. The scream was not an expression of sensuality. Sensuality is the total mobilization of the senses: an individual observes the partner intently, straining to catch every sound. But her scream aimed at crippling the senses, preventing all seeing and hearing. What was screaming, in fact, was the naïve idealism of her love trying to banish all contradictions, banish the duality of body and soul, banish perhaps even time.

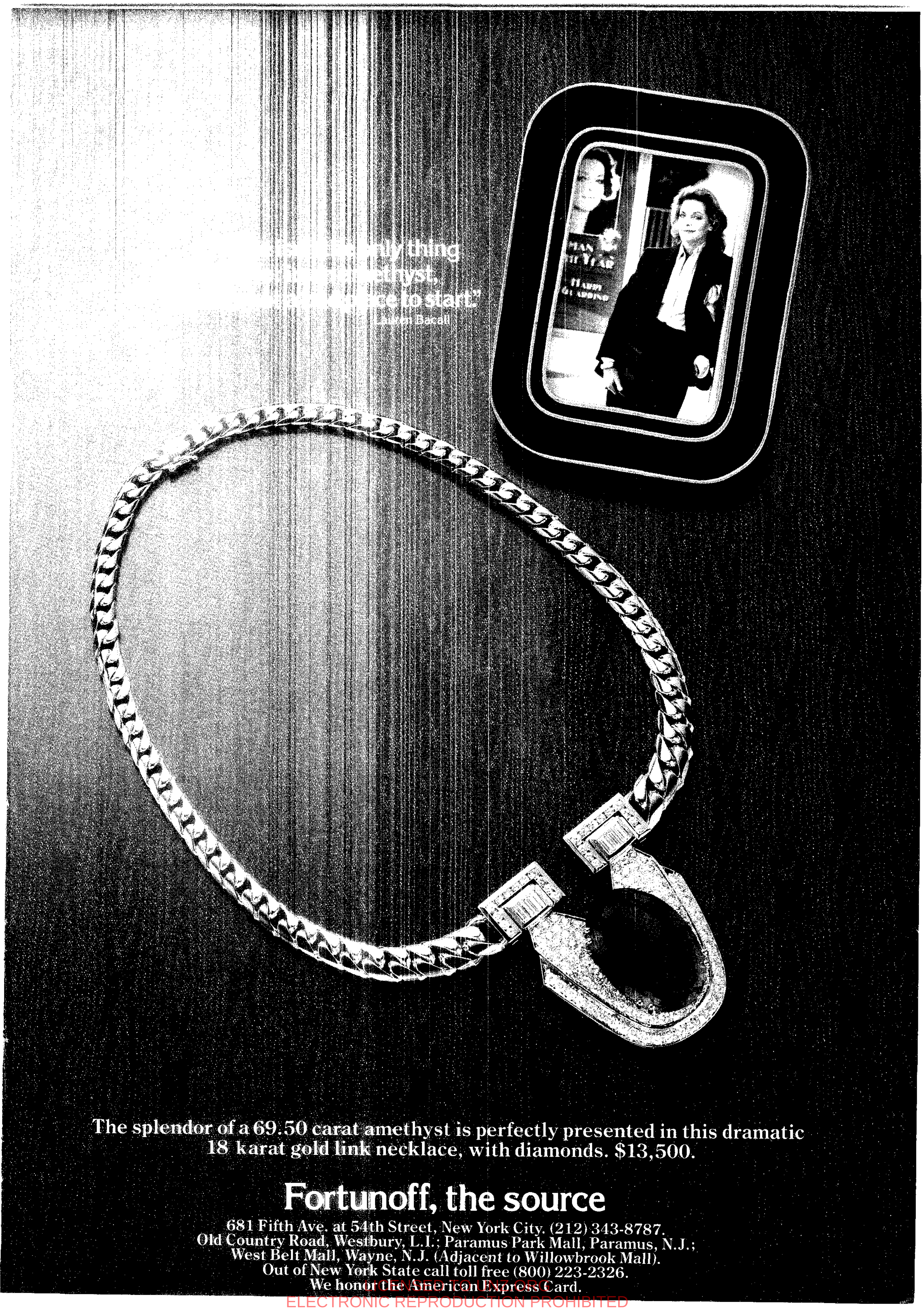
Were her eyes closed? No, but they were not looking anywhere. She kept them fixed on the void of the ceiling. At times she twisted her head violently from side to side.

When the scream died down, she fell asleep at his side, clutching his hand. She held his hand all night.

Even at the age of eight, she would fall asleep by pressing one hand into the other and making believe she was holding the hand of the man whom she loved, the man of her life. So if in her sleep she pressed Tomas's hand with such tenacity, we can understand why: she had been training for it since childhood.

14

A YOUNG woman forced to keep drunks supplied with beer, and siblings with clean underwear—instead of being allowed to pursue "something higher"—stores up great reserves of vitality, a vitality never dreamed of by university students yawning over their books. Tereza had read a good deal more than they, and learned a good deal more about life, but she would never realize it. The difference between the university graduate and the autodidact lies not so much in the extent of knowledge as in the extent of vitality and self-confidence. The élan with which Tereza



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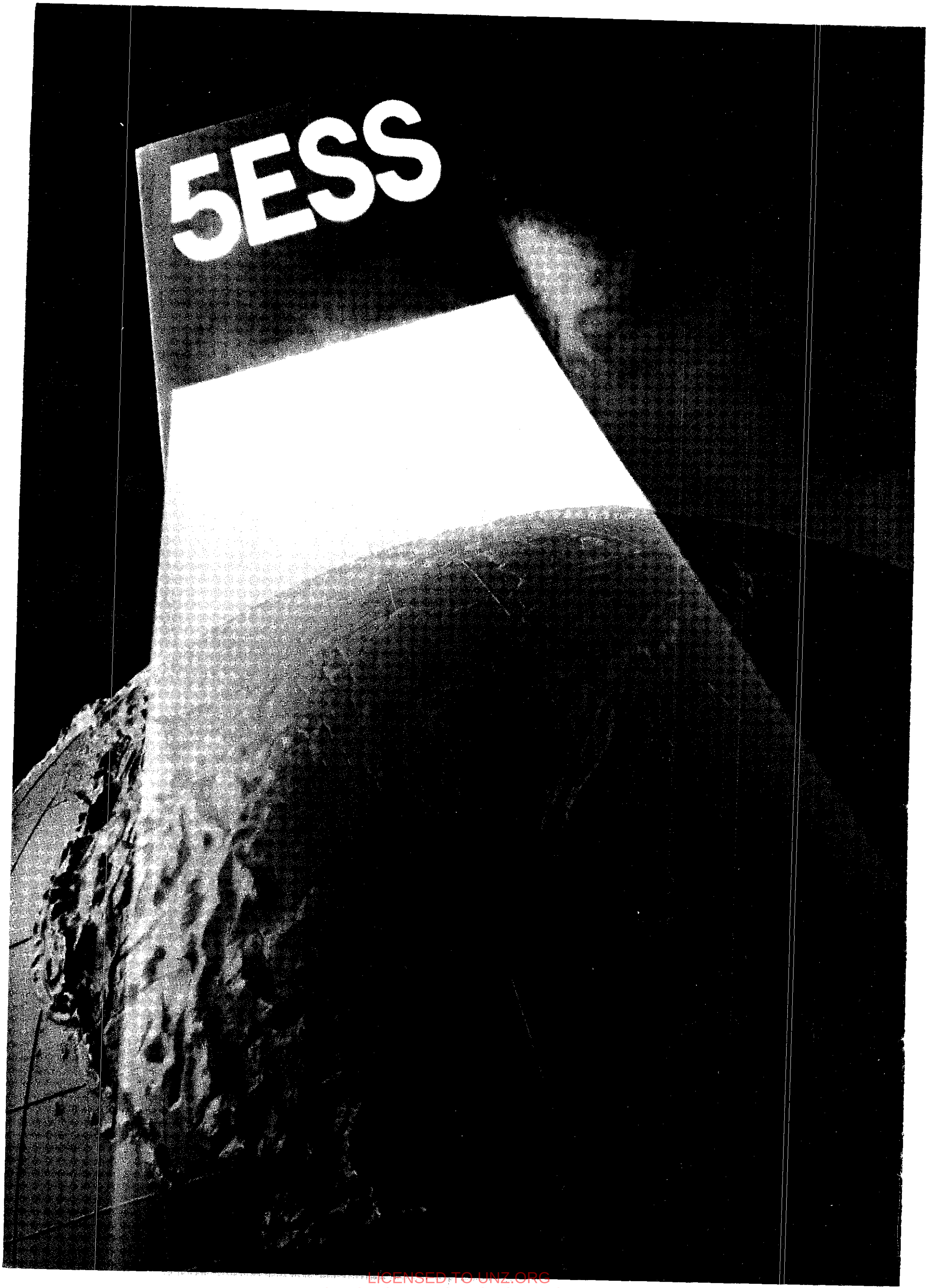
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flung herself into her new Prague existence was both frenzied and precarious. She seemed to be expecting someone to come up to her any day and say, "What are you doing here? Go back where you belong!" All her eagerness for life hung by a thread: Tomas's voice. For it was Tomas's voice that had once coaxed forth her timorous soul from its hiding place in her bowels.

Tereza had a job in a darkroom, but it was not enough for her. She wanted to take pictures, not develop them. Tomas's friend Sabina lent her three or four collections of famous photographers, then invited her to a café and explained over the open books what made each of the pictures interesting. Tereza listened with silent concentration—the kind few professors ever glimpse on their students' faces.

Thanks to Sabina, Tereza came to understand the ties between photography and painting, and she made Tomas take her to every exhibition that opened in Prague. Before long, her own pictures were appearing in the illustrated weekly where she worked, and finally she left the darkroom for the staff of professional photographers.

On the evening of that day, she and Tomas went out to a bar with friends to celebrate her promotion. Everyone danced. Tomas began to mope. Back at home, after some prodding from Tereza, he admitted that he had been jealous watching her dance with a colleague of his.

"You mean you were really jealous?" she asked him ten times or more, incredulously, as though someone had just informed her she had been awarded a Nobel Prize.

Then she put her arm around his waist and began dancing across the room. The step she used was not the one she had shown off in the bar. It was more like a village polka—a wild romp that sent her legs flying in the air and her torso bouncing all over the room, with Tomas in tow.

Before long, unfortunately, she began to be jealous herself, and Tomas saw her jealousy not as a Nobel Prize but as a burden, a burden he would be saddled with until not long before his death.

15

WHILE she marched around the pool naked with a large group of other naked women, Tomas stood over them in a pannier hanging from the pool's arched roof, shouting at them, making them sing and do knee

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bends. The moment one of them did a faulty knee bend, he would shoot her.

Let me return to this dream. Its horror did not begin with Tomas's first pistol shot; it was horrifying from the outset. Marching naked in formation with a group of naked women was for Tereza the quintessential image of horror. When she lived at home, her mother forbade her to lock the bathroom door. What she meant by her injunction was: Your body is just like all other bodies; you have no right to shame; you have no reason to hide something that exists in millions of identical copies. In her mother's world all bodies were the same and marched one behind another in formation. Since childhood Tereza had seen nudity as a sign of concentration-camp uniformity, a sign of humiliation.

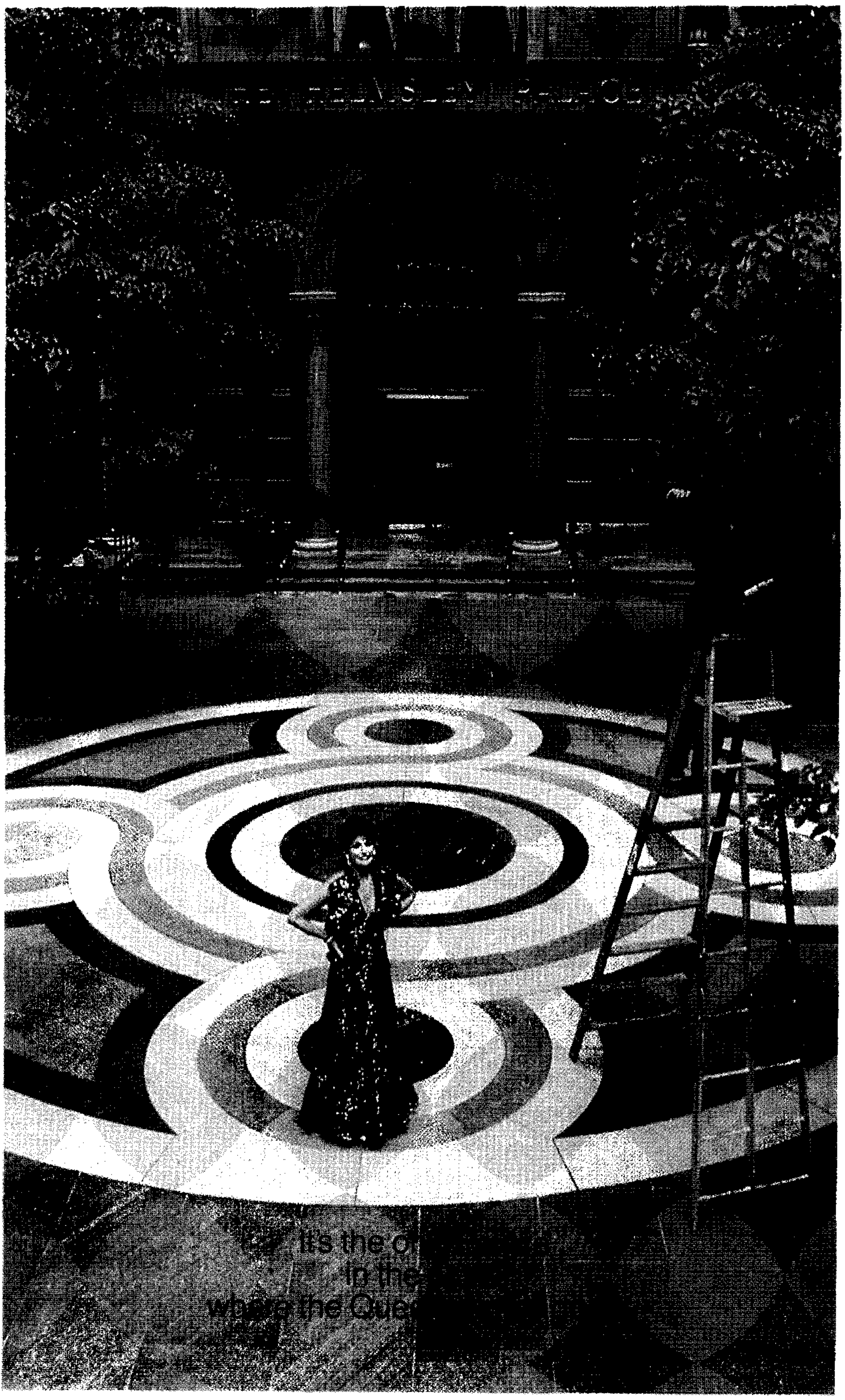
There was yet another horror at the very beginning of the dream: all the women had to sing! Not only were their bodies identical, identically worthless, not only were their bodies mere resounding soulless mechanisms—the women rejoiced over it! Theirs was a joyful solidarity of the soulless. The women were pleased at having thrown off the ballast of the soul—that laughable conceit, that illusion of uniqueness—to become one like another. Tereza sang with them but did not rejoice. She sang because she was afraid that if she did not sing the women would kill her.

But what was the meaning of the fact that Tomas shot at them, toppling one after another into the pool, dead?

The women, overjoyed by their sameness, their lack of diversity, were in fact celebrating their imminent demise, which would render their sameness absolute. So Tomas's shots were merely the joyful climax to their morbid march. After every report of his pistol, they burst into joyous laughter, and as each corpse sank beneath the surface they sang even louder.

But why was Tomas the one doing the shooting? And why was he out to shoot Tereza with the rest of them?

Because he was the one who sent Tereza to join them. That was what the dream was meant to tell Tomas, what Tereza was unable to tell him herself. She had come to him to escape her mother's world, a world where all bodies were equal. She had come to him to make her body unique, irreplaceable. But he, too, had drawn an equal sign between her and the rest of them: he kissed them all alike, stroked them all alike, made no, absolutely no, distinction between Tereza's body and



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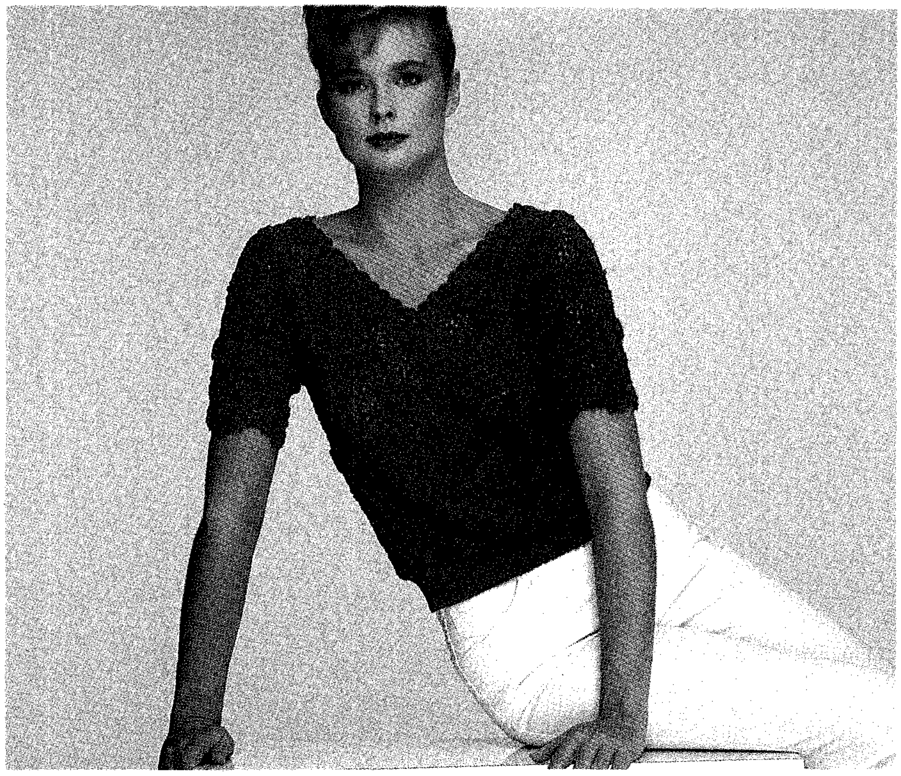

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the other bodies. He had sent her back into the world she tried to escape, sent her to march naked with the other naked women.

16

SHE would dream three series of dreams in succession. The first was of cats going berserk and referred to the sufferings she had gone through in her lifetime; the second was images of her execution and came in countless variations; the third was of her life after death, when humiliation turned into a never-ending state.

The dreams left nothing to be deciphered. The accusation they levelled at Tomas was so clear that his only reaction was to hang his head and stroke her hand without a word.

The dreams were eloquent, but they were also beautiful. That aspect seems to have escaped Freud in his theory of dreams. Dreaming is not merely an act of communication (or coded communication, if you like); it is also an aesthetic activity, a game of the imagination, a game that is a value in itself. Our dreams prove that to imagine—to dream about things that have not happened—is among mankind's deepest needs. Herein lies the danger: if dreams were not beautiful, they would quickly be forgotten. But Tereza kept coming back to her dreams, running through them in her mind, turning them into legends. Tomas lived under the hypnotic spell cast by the excruciating beauty of Tereza's dreams.

"Dear Tereza, sweet Tereza, what am I losing you to?" he once said to her as they sat face to face in a wine tavern. "Every night, you dream of death as if you really wished to quit this world. . . ."

It was day; reason and will power were back in place. A drop of red wine ran slowly down her glass as she answered. "There's nothing I can do about it, Tomas. Oh, I understand. I know you love me. I know your infidelities are no great tragedy. . . ."

She looked at him with love in her eyes, but she feared the night ahead, feared her dreams. Her life was split. Day and night were competing for her.

17

ANYONE whose goal is "something higher" must expect someday to suffer vertigo. What is vertigo? Fear of falling? Then why do we feel it even when the observation tower comes equipped with a sturdy handrail? No, vertigo is something other than the fear of falling. It is the voice of the emptiness below us which tempts and lures us, it is the desire to fall, against which, terrified, we defend ourselves.

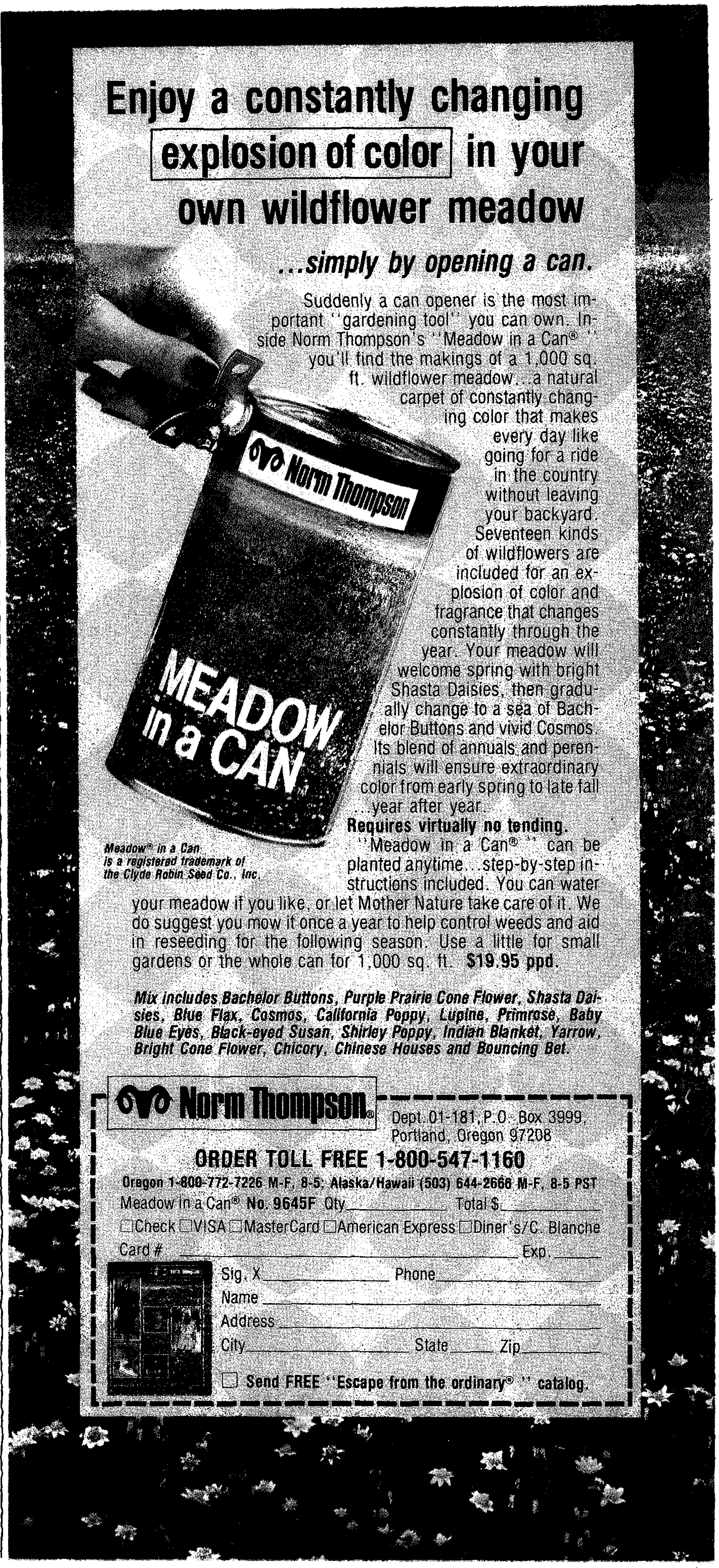
The naked women marching around the swimming pool, the corpses in the hearse rejoicing that she, too, was dead—these were the "down below" that she had feared and fled once before but that mysteriously beckoned her. These were her vertigo: she heard a sweet (almost joyous) summons to renounce her fate and soul. The solidarity of the soulless calling her. And in times of weakness she was ready to heed the call and return to her mother. She was ready to dismiss the crew of her soul from the deck of her body; ready to descend to a place among her mother's friends and laugh when one of them broke wind noisily; ready to march around the pool naked with them and sing.

18

TRUE, Tereza fought with her mother until the day she left home, but let us not forget that she never stopped loving her. She would have done anything for her if her mother had asked in a loving voice. The only reason she found the strength to leave was that she never heard that voice.

When Tereza's mother realized that her aggressiveness no longer had any power over her daughter, she started writing her querulous letters, complaining about her husband, her boss, her health, her children, and assuring Tereza she was the only person she had in the world. Tereza thought that at last, after twenty years, she was hearing the voice of her mother's love, and felt like going back. All the more so because she felt so weak, so debilitated by Tomas's infidelities. They exposed her powerlessness, which in turn led to vertigo, the insuperable longing to fall.

One day her mother phoned to say that she had cancer and only a few months to live. The news transformed into rebellion Tereza's despair at Tomas's infidelities. She had betrayed her mother, she told herself reproachfully, and for a man who did not love her. She was willing to forget everything her mother had done to torture her. She was in a position to understand her now; they were in the same situation: her mother loved her stepfather just as Tereza loved Tomas, and her stepfather tortured her mother with his infidelities just as Tomas galled



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Tereza with his. The cause of her mother's malice was that she had suffered so.

Tereza told Tomas that her mother was ill and that she would be taking a week off to go and see her. Her voice was full of spite.

Sensing that the real reason calling her back to her mother was vertigo, Tomas opposed the trip. He rang up the hospital in the small town. Meticulous records of the incidence of cancer were kept throughout the country, so he had no trouble finding out that Tereza's mother had never been suspected of having the disease nor had she even seen a doctor for over a year.

Tereza obeyed Tomas and did not go to visit her mother. Several hours after the decision, she fell in the street and injured her knee. She began to teeter as she walked, fell almost daily, bumped into things or, at the very least, dropped objects.

She *was* in the grip of an insuperable longing to fall. She lived in a constant state of vertigo.

"Pick me up" is the message of a person who keeps falling. Tomas kept picking her up, patiently.

19

"I WANT to make love to you in my studio. It will be like a stage surrounded by people. The audience won't be allowed up close, but they won't be able to take their eyes off us."

As time passed, the image lost some of its original cruelty and began to excite Tereza. She would whisper the details to him while they made love.

Then it occurred to her that there might be a way to avoid the condemnation she saw in Tomas's infidelities: all he had to do was to take her along, take her with him when he went to see his mistresses! Maybe then her body would again become the first and only among all others. Her body would become his second, his assistant, his alter ego.

"I'll undress them for you, give them a bath, bring them in to you . . ." she would whisper to him as they pressed together. She yearned for the two of them to merge into a hermaphrodite. Then the other women's bodies would be their playthings.

20

OH, to be the alter ego of his polygamous life! Tomas refused to understand, but she could not get it out of her head, and tried to cultivate her friendship with Sabina. Tereza be-

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gan by offering to do a series of photographs of Sabina.

Sabina invited Tereza to her studio, and at last she saw the spacious room and its centerpiece: the large, square platform-like bed.

"I feel awful that you've never been here before," said Sabina as she showed her the pictures leaning against the wall. She even pulled out an old canvas, of a steelworks under construction, which she had done during her school days, a period when the strictest realism had been required of all students (art that was not realistic was said to sap the foundations of socialism). In the spirit of the times, she had tried to be stricter than her teachers and had painted in a style concealing the brushstrokes and closely resembling color photography.

"Here is a painting I happened to drip red paint on. At first I was terribly upset, but then I started enjoying it. The trickle looked like a crack, it turned the building site into a battered old backdrop, a backdrop with a building site painted on it. I began playing with the crack, filling it out, wondering what might be visible behind it. And that's how I began my first cycle of paintings. I called it 'Behind the Scenes.' Of course, I couldn't show them to anybody. I'd have been kicked out of the Academy. On the surface there was always an impeccably realistic world, but underneath, behind the backdrop's cracked canvas, there lurked something different, something mysterious or abstract."

After pausing for a moment, she added, "On the surface, an intelligible lie; underneath, the unintelligible truth."

Tereza listened to her with the remarkable concentration that few professors ever see on the face of a student and began to perceive that all Sabina's paintings, past and present, did indeed treat the same idea—that they all featured the confluence of two themes, two worlds, that they were all double exposures, so to speak. A landscape showing an old-fashioned table lamp shining through it. An idyllic still-life of apples, nuts, and a tiny candlelit Christmas tree showing a hand ripping through the canvas.

She felt a rush of admiration for Sabina, and because Sabina treated her as a friend it was an admiration free of fear and suspicion and quickly turned into friendship.

Tereza nearly forgot she had come to take photographs. Sabina had to remind her. Tereza finally looked away from the paintings, only to see the bed set in the middle of the room like a platform.

21

NEXT to the bed stood a small table, and on the table a model of a human head, the kind hairdressers put wigs on. Sabina's wig stand sported a bowler hat rather than a wig. "It used to belong to my grandfather," she said with a smile.

It was the kind of hat—black, hard, round—that Tereza had seen only on the screen, the kind of hat Chaplin wore. She smiled back, picked it up, and, after studying it for a time, said, "Would you like me to take your picture in it?"

Sabina laughed for a long time at the idea. Tereza put down the bowler hat, picked up her camera, and started taking pictures.

When she had been at it for almost an hour, she suddenly said, "What would you say to some nude shots?"

"Nude shots?" Sabina laughed.

"Yes," said Tereza, repeating her proposal more boldly. "Nude shots."

"That calls for a drink," said Sabina, and opened a bottle of wine.

Tereza felt her body going weak; she was suddenly tongue-tied. Sabina, meanwhile, strode back and forth, wine in hand, going on about her grandfather, who had been the mayor of a small town; Sabina had never known him; all he'd left behind was this bowler hat and a picture showing a raised platform with several small-town dignitaries on it; one of them was Grandfather; it wasn't at all clear what they were doing up there on the platform; maybe they were officiating at some ceremony, unveiling a monument to a fellow-dignitary who had also once worn a bowler hat at public ceremonies.

Sabina went on and on about the bowler hat and her grandfather until, emptying her third glass, she said, "I'll be right back," and disappeared into the bathroom.

She came out in her bathrobe. Tereza picked up her camera and put it to her eye. Sabina threw open the robe.

22

THE camera served Tereza as both a mechanical eye through which to observe Tomas's mistress and a veil by which to conceal her face from her.

It took Sabina some time before she could bring herself to slip out of the robe entirely. The situation she found herself in was proving a bit more difficult than she had expected. After several minutes of posing she went up to Tereza and said, "Now it's my turn to take your picture. Strip!"

Sabina had heard the command "Strip!" so many times from Tomas it was engraved in her memory. Thus, Tomas's mistress had just given Tomas's command to Tomas's wife. The two women were joined by the same magic word. That was Tomas's way of unexpectedly turning an innocent conversation with a woman into an erotic situation. Instead of stroking, flattering, pleading, he would issue a command, issue it abruptly, unexpectedly, softly yet firmly and authoritatively, and at a distance; at such moments, he never touched the woman he was addressing. He often used it on Tereza as well, and even though he said it softly, even though he whispered it, it was a command, and obeying never failed to arouse her. Hearing the word now made her desire to obey even stronger, because doing a stranger's bidding is a special madness, a madness all the more heady in this case because the command came not from a man but from a woman.

Sabina took the camera from her, and Tereza took off her clothes. There she stood before Sabina, naked and disarmed. Literally disarmed: deprived of the apparatus she had been using to cover her face and aim at Sabina like a weapon. She was completely at the mercy of Tomas's mistress. This beautiful submission intoxicated Tereza. She wished that the moments she stood naked opposite Sabina would never end.

I think that Sabina, too, felt the strange enchantment of the situation: her lover's wife standing oddly compliant and timorous before her. But after clicking the shutter two or three times, almost frightened by the enchantment and eager to dispel it, she burst into loud laughter.

Tereza followed suit, and the two of them got dressed.

23

ALL previous crimes of the Russian empire had been committed under the cover of a discreet shadow. The deportation of half a million Lithuanians, the murder of hundreds of thousands of Poles, the liquidation of the Crimean Tatars remain in our memory, but no photographic documentation exists; sooner or later they will therefore be proclaimed as fabrications. Not so the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, of which both stills and motion pictures are stored in archives throughout the world.

Czech photographers were acutely aware that they were the ones who could best do the only thing left to do: preserve the face of violence for the distant future. Seven days in a row, Tereza roamed the streets photographing Russian soldiers and officers in compromising situations. The Russians did not know what to do. They had been carefully briefed about how to behave if someone fired at them or threw stones, but they had received no directives about what to do when someone aimed a lens.

She shot roll after roll and gave about half the film, undeveloped, to foreign journalists (the borders were still open, and reporters passing through were grateful for any kind of document). Many of her photographs turned up in the Western press. They were pictures of tanks, of threatening fists, of houses destroyed, of corpses covered with bloodstained red-white-and-blue Czech flags, of young men on motorcycles racing full speed round the tanks and waving Czech flags on long staffs, of young girls in unbelievably short skirts provoking the miserable sexually famished Russian soldiers by kissing random passersby before their eyes. As I have said, the Russian invasion was not only a tragedy; it was a carnival of hate filled with a curious (and no longer explicable) euphoria.

24

SHE took some fifty prints with her to Switzerland, prints she had made herself with all the care and skill she could muster. She offered them to a high-circulation illustrated magazine. The editor gave her a kind reception (all Czechs still wore the halo of their misfortune, and the good Swiss were touched); he offered her a seat, looked through the prints, praised them, and explained that because a certain time had elapsed since the events they hadn't the slightest chance ("not that they aren't very beautiful!") of being published.

"But it's not over yet in Prague!" Tereza protested, and tried to explain to him in her bad German that at this very moment, even with the country occupied, with everything against them, workers' councils were forming in the factories, the students were going out on strike demanding the departure of the Russians, and the whole country was saying aloud what it thought. "That's what's so unbelievable! And nobody here cares anymore."

The editor was glad when an energetic woman came into the office and interrupted the conversation. The woman handed him a folder and said, "Here's the nudist-beach article."

The editor was delicate enough to fear that a Czech who photographed tanks would find pictures of naked people on a beach frivolous. He laid the folder at the far end of the desk and quickly said to the woman, "How would you like to meet a Czech colleague of yours? She's brought me some marvellous pictures."

The woman shook Tereza's hand and picked up her photographs. "Have a look at mine in the meantime," she said.

Tereza leaned over to the folder and took out the pictures.

Almost apologetically the editor said to Tereza, "Of course, they're completely different from your pictures."

"Not at all," said Tereza. "They're the same."

Neither the editor nor the photographer understood her, and even I find it difficult to explain what she had in mind when she compared a nude beach to the Russian invasion. Looking through the pictures, she stopped for a time at one that showed a family of four standing in a circle: a naked mother leaning over her children, her giant tits hanging low like a goat's or cow's, and the husband leaning the same way on the other side, his penis and scrotum looking very much like an udder in miniature.

"You don't like them, do you?" asked the editor.

"They're good photographs."

"She's shocked by the subject matter," said the woman. "I can tell just by looking at you that you've never set foot on a nude beach."

"No," said Tereza.

The editor smiled. "You see how easy it is to guess where you're from? The Communist countries are awfully puritanical."

"There's nothing wrong with the naked body," the woman said with maternal affection. "It's normal. And everything that's normal is beautiful!"

The image of her mother marching around the flat naked flashed through Tereza's mind. She could still hear the laughter behind her back when she ran and pulled the curtains to stop the neighbors from seeing her naked mother.

25

THE photographer invited Tereza to the magazine's cafeteria for a cup of coffee. "Those pictures of yours, they're very interesting. I couldn't help noticing what a terrific sense of the female body you have. You know what I mean. The girls with the provocative poses!"

"The ones kissing passersby in front of the Russian tanks?"

"Yes. You'd be a topnotch fashion photographer, you know? You'd have to get yourself a model first—someone, like you, who's looking for a break. Then you could make a portfolio of photographs and show them to the agencies. It would take some time before you made a name for yourself, naturally, but I can do one thing for you here and now: introduce you to the editor in charge of our garden section. He might need some shots of cactuses and roses and things."

"Thank you very much," Tereza said sincerely, because it was clear that the woman sitting opposite her was full of good will.

But then she said to herself, "Why take pictures of cactuses?" She had no desire to go through in Zurich what she'd been through in Prague: battles over job, career, over every picture published. She had never been ambitious out of vanity. All she had ever wanted was to escape from her mother's world. Yes, she saw it with absolute clarity: no matter how enthusiastic she was about taking pictures, she could just as easily have turned her enthusiasm to any other endeavor. Photography was nothing but a way of getting at "something higher" and living beside Tomas.

She said, "My husband is a doctor. He can support me. I don't need to take pictures."

The photographer replied, "I don't see how you can give it up after the beautiful work you've done."

Yes, the pictures of the invasion were something else again. She had not done them for Tomas. She had done them out of passion. But not passion for photography. She'd done them out of passionate hatred. The situation would never recur. And these photographs, which she had made out of passion, were the ones nobody wanted because they were out of date.

Only cactuses had perennial appeal. And cactuses were of no interest to her.

She said, "You're too kind, really, but I'd rather stay at home. I don't need a job."

The woman said, "But will you be fulfilled sitting at home?"

Tereza said, "More fulfilled than by taking pictures of cactuses."

The woman said, "Even if you take pictures of cactuses, you're leading *your* life. If you only live for your husband, you have no life of your own."

All of a sudden Tereza felt annoyed. "My husband is my life, not cactuses."

The woman responded in kind. "You mean you think of yourself as happy?"

Tereza, still annoyed, said, "Of course I'm happy!"

The woman said, "The only kind of woman who can say that is very—" She stopped short.

Tereza finished it for her. "Limited. That's what you mean, isn't it?"

The woman regained control of herself and said, "Not limited. Anachronistic."

"You're right," said Tereza wistfully. "That's just what my husband says about me."

26

BUT Tomas spent days on end at the hospital, and she was at home alone. At least she had Karenin and could take him on long walks! Home again, she would pore over her German and French grammars. But she felt sad and had trouble concentrating. She kept coming back to the speech Dubček had given over the radio after his return from Moscow. Although she had completely forgotten what he said, she could still hear his quavering voice. She thought about how foreign soldiers had arrested him, the head of an independent state, in his own country, held him for four days somewhere in the Ukrainian mountains, informed him he was to be executed—as, a decade before, they had executed his Hungarian counterpart, Imre Nagy—then packed him off to Moscow, ordered him to have a bath and shave, to change his clothes and put on a tie, apprised him of the decision to commute his execution, instructed him to consider himself head of state once more, sat him at a table opposite Brezhnev, and forced him to act.

He returned, humiliated, to address his humiliated nation. He was so humiliated he could not even speak. Tereza would never forget those awful pauses in the middle of his sentences. Was he that exhausted? Ill? Had they drugged him? Or was it only despair? If nothing was to remain of Dubček, then at least those awful long pauses when he seemed unable to breathe, when he gasped for air before a whole nation glued to its radios—at least those pauses would remain. Those pauses contained all the horror that had befallen their country.

It was the seventh day of the invasion. She heard the speech in the editorial offices of a newspaper that had been transformed overnight into an organ of the resistance. Everyone present hated Dubček at that moment. They reproached him for compromising; they felt humiliated by his humiliation; his weakness offended them.

Thinking in Zurich of those days, she no longer felt any aversion to the man. The word "weak" no longer sounded like a verdict. Any man confronted with superior strength is weak, even if he has an athletic body like Dubček's. The very weakness that at the time had seemed unbearable and repulsive, the weakness that had driven Tereza and Tomas from the country, suddenly attracted her. She realized that she belonged among the weak, in the camp of the weak, in the country of the weak, and that she had to be faithful to them exactly because they were weak and gasped for breath in the middle of sentences.

She felt attracted by their weakness as by vertigo. She felt attracted by it because she felt weak herself. Again she began to feel jealous and again her hands shook. When Tomas noticed it, he did what he usually did: he took her hands in his and tried to calm them by pressing hard. She tore them away from him.

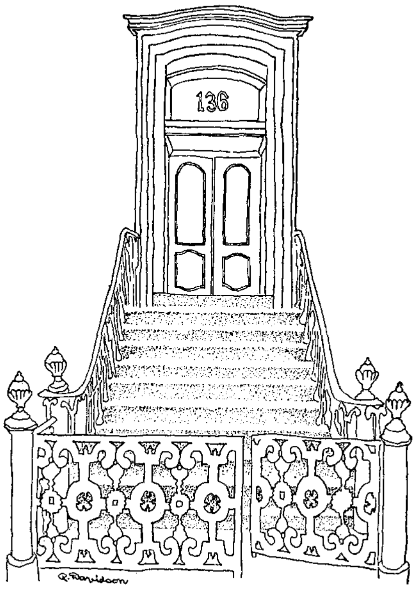
"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Nothing."

"What do you want me to do for you?"

"I want you to be old. Ten years older. Twenty years older!"

What she meant was: I want you to be weak. As weak as I am.



27

KARENIN was not overjoyed by the move to Switzerland. Karenin hated change. Dog time cannot be plotted along a straight line; it does not move on and on, from one thing to the next. It moves in a circle like the hands of a clock, which—they, too, unwilling to dash madly ahead—turn round and round the face, day in and day out, following the same path. In Prague, when Tomas and Tereza bought a new chair or moved a flowerpot, Karenin would look on in displeasure. It disturbed his sense of time. It was as though they were trying to dupe the hands of the clock by changing the numbers on its face.

Nonetheless, he soon managed to reëstablish the old order and old rituals in the Zurich flat. As in Prague, he would jump up on their bed and welcome them to the day, accompany Tereza on her morning shopping jaunt, and make certain he got the other walks coming to him as well.

He was the timepiece of their lives. In periods of despair, Tereza would remind herself she had to hold on because of him, because Karenin was weaker than she, weaker perhaps even than Dubček and their abandoned homeland.

One day when they came back from a walk, the phone was ringing. She picked up the receiver and asked who it was.

It was a woman's voice, speaking German and asking for Tomas. It was an impatient voice, and Tereza felt there was a hint of derision in it. When she said that Tomas wasn't there and she didn't know when he'd be back, the woman on the other end of the line started laughing and, without saying goodbye, hung up.

Tereza knew it did not mean a thing. It could have been a nurse from the hospital, a patient, a secretary, anyone. But still she was upset and unable to concentrate on anything. It was then that she realized she had lost the last bit of strength she had had at home: she was absolutely incapable of tolerating this absolutely insignificant incident.

Being in a foreign country means walking a tightrope high above the ground without the net afforded a person by the country where he has his family, colleagues, and friends and where he can easily say what he has to say in a language he has known from childhood. In Prague she was dependent on Tomas only when it came to the heart; here she was dependent on him for everything. What would happen to her here if he abandoned her? Would she have to live her whole life in fear of losing him?

She told herself: Their acquaintance had been based on an error from the start. The copy of "Anna Karenina" under her arm amounted to false papers; it had given Tomas the wrong idea. In spite of their love, they had made each other's life a hell. The fact that they loved each other was merely proof that the fault lay not in themselves, in their behavior or inconstancy of feeling, but, rather, in their incompatibility: he was strong and she was weak. She was like Dubček, who made a thirty-second pause in the middle of a sentence; she was like her country, which stuttered, gasped for breath, could not speak.

But when the strong were too weak to hurt the weak, the weak had to be strong enough to leave.

And, having told herself all this, she pressed her face against Karenin's furry head and said, "Sorry, Karenin. It looks as though you're going to have to move again."

28

SITTING crushed into a corner of the train compartment with her heavy suitcase above her head and Karenin squeezed against her legs, she kept thinking about the cook at the hotel restaurant where she had worked when she lived with her mother. The cook would take every opportunity to give her a slap on the behind, and never tired of asking her in front of everyone when she would give in and go to bed with him. It was odd that he was the one who came to mind. He had always been the prime example of everything she loathed. And now all she could think of was looking him up and telling him, "You used to say you wanted to sleep with me. Well, here I am."

She longed to do something that would prevent her from turning back to Tomas. She longed to destroy brutally the past seven years of her life. It was vertigo. A heady, insuperable longing to fall.

We might also call vertigo the intoxication of the weak. Aware of his weakness, a man decides to give in rather than stand up to it. He is drunk with weakness, wishes to grow even weaker, wishes to fall down in the middle of the main square in front of everybody, wishes to be down, lower than down.

She tried to talk herself into settling outside of Prague and giving up her profession as a photographer. She would go back to the small town from which Tomas's voice had once lured her.

But once in Prague she found she had to spend some time taking care of various practical matters and began putting off her departure.

On the fifth day, Tomas suddenly turned up. Karenin jumped all over him, so it was a while before they had to make any overtures to each other.

They felt they were standing on a snow-covered plain, shivering with cold.

Then they moved together like lovers who had never kissed before.

"Has everything been all right?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered.

"Have you been to the magazine?"

"I've given them a call."

"Well?"

"Nothing yet. I've been waiting."

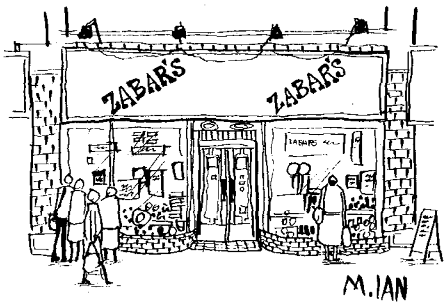
"For what?"

She made no response. She could not tell him that she had been waiting for him.

29

NOW we return to a moment we already know about. Tomas was desperately unhappy and had a bad stomach ache. He did not fall asleep until very late at night.

Soon thereafter Tereza awoke. (There were Russian airplanes circling over Prague, and it was impossible to sleep for the noise.) Her first thought was that he had come back because of her; because of her, he had changed his destiny. Now he would no longer be responsible for her; now she was responsible for him.



The responsibility, she felt, seemed to require more strength than she could muster.

But all at once she recalled that just before he had appeared at the door of their flat the day before, the church bells had chimed six o'clock. On the day they first met, her shift had ended at six. She saw him sitting there in front of her on the yellow bench and heard the bells in the belfry chime six.

No, it was not superstition, it was a sense of beauty that cured her of her depression and imbued her with a new will to live. The birds of fortuity had alighted once more on her shoulders. There were tears in her eyes, and she was unutterably happy to hear him breathing at her side.

WORDS MISUNDERSTOOD

1

GENEVA is a city of fountains large and small, of parks where music once rang out from the bandstands. Even the university is hidden among trees. Franz had just finished his afternoon lecture. As he left the building, the sprinklers were spouting jets of water over the lawn and he was in a capital mood. He was on his way to see his mistress. She lived only a few streets away.

He often stopped in for a visit, but only as a friend, never as a lover. If he made love to her in her Geneva studio, he would be going from one woman to the other, from wife to mistress and back, in a single day, and because in Geneva husband and wife sleep together in the French style, in the same bed, he would be going from the bed of one woman to the bed of another in the space of several hours. And that, he felt, would humiliate both mistress and wife and, in the end, him as well.

The feeling he had for this woman, with whom he had fallen in love several months before, was so precious to him that he tried to create an independent space for her in his life, a restricted zone of purity. He was often invited to lecture at foreign universities, and now he accepted all offers. But because there were not enough of them to satisfy his newfound wanderlust, he took to inventing congresses and symposia as a means of justifying the absences to his wife. His mistress, who had a flexible schedule, accompanied him on all speaking engagements, real and imagined. So it was that within a short span of time he introduced her to many European cities and one in America.

"How would you like to go to Palermo ten days from now?" asked Franz.

"I prefer Geneva," she answered. She was standing in front of her easel, examining a work in progress.

"How can you live without seeing Palermo?" asked Franz in an attempt at levity.

"I have seen Palermo," she said.

"You have?" he said, with a hint of jealousy.

"A friend of mine once sent me a postcard from there. It's taped up over the toilet. Haven't you noticed?"

Then she told him a story. "Once upon a time, in the early part of the century, there lived a poet. He was so old he had to be accompanied on walks by his amanuensis. 'Master,' his amanuensis said one day, 'look what's up in the sky! It's the first airplane ever to fly over the city!' 'I have my own picture of it,' said the poet to his amanuensis, without raising his eyes from the ground. Well, I have my own picture of Palermo. It has the same hotels and cars as all cities. And my studio always has new and different pictures."

Franz was sad. He had grown so accustomed to linking their love life to foreign travel that his "Let's go to Palermo!" was an unambiguous erotic message and her "I prefer Geneva" could have only one meaning: his mistress no longer desired him.

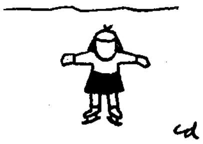
How could he be so unsure of himself with her? She had not given him the slightest cause for worry! In fact, she was the one who had taken the erotic initiative shortly after they met. He was a good-looking man; he was at the peak of his scholarly career; he was even feared by his colleagues for the arrogance and tenacity he displayed during professional meetings and colloquia. Then why did he worry daily that his mistress was about to leave him?

The only explanation I can suggest is that for Franz love was not an extension of public life but its antithesis. It meant a longing to put himself at the mercy of his partner. He who gives himself up like a prisoner of war must give up his weapons as well. And, deprived of any defense against a possible blow, he cannot help wondering when the blow will fall. That is why I can say that for Franz love meant the constant expectation of a blow.

While Franz attended to his anguish, his mistress put down her brush and went into the next room. She returned with a bottle of wine. She opened it without a word and poured out two glasses.

Immediately he felt relieved and slightly ridiculous. The "I prefer Geneva" did not mean she refused to make love; quite the contrary, it meant she was tired of limiting their lovemaking to foreign cities.

She raised her glass and emptied it in one swig. Franz did the same. He was naturally overjoyed that her refusal to go to Palermo was actually a call to love, but he was a bit sorry as well: his mistress seemed determined to violate the zone of purity he had introduced into their relationship; she had failed to understand his apprehensive attempts to save their love from banality and separate it radically from his conjugal home.



The ban on making love with his painter mistress in Geneva was actually a self-inflicted punishment for having married another woman. He felt it as a kind of guilt or defect. Even though his conjugal sex life was hardly worth mentioning, he and his wife still slept in the same bed, awoke in the middle of the night to each other's heavy breathing, and inhaled the smells of each other's bodies. True, he would rather have slept by himself, but the marriage bed is still the symbol of the marriage bond, and symbols, as we know, are inviolable.

Each time he lay down next to his wife in that bed, he thought of his mistress imagining him lying down next to his wife in that bed, and each time he thought of her he felt ashamed. That was why he wished to separate the bed he slept in with his wife as far as possible in space from the bed he made love in with his mistress.

His mistress poured herself another glass of wine, drank it down, and then, still silent and with a curious nonchalance, as if completely unaware of Franz's presence, slowly removed her blouse. She was behaving like an acting student whose improvisation assignment is to make the class believe she is alone in a room and no one can see her.

Standing there in her skirt and bra, she suddenly (as if recalling only then that she was not alone in the room) fixed Franz with a long stare.

That stare bewildered him; he could not understand it. All lovers unconsciously establish their own rules of the game, which from the outset admit no transgression. The stare she had just fixed on him fell outside their rules; it had nothing in common with the looks and gestures that usually preceded their lovemaking. It was neither provocative nor flirtatious—simply interrogative. The problem was, Franz had not the slightest notion what it was asking.

Next she stepped out of her skirt and, taking Franz by the hand, turned him in the direction of a large mirror propped against the wall. Without letting go of his hand, she looked into the mirror with the same long questioning stare, training it first on herself, then on him.

Near the mirror stood a wig stand with an old black bowler hat on it. She bent over, picked up the hat, and put it on her head. The image in the mirror was instantaneously transformed: suddenly it was a woman in her undergarments, a beautiful, distant, indifferent woman with a terribly out-of-place bowler hat on her head, holding the hand of a man in a gray suit and tie.

Again he had to smile at how poorly he understood his mistress. When she took her clothes off, it wasn't so much erotic provocation as an odd little caper, a happening à deux. His smile beamed understanding and consent.

He waited for his mistress to respond in kind, but she did not. Without letting go of his hand, she stood staring into the mirror, first at herself, then at him.

The time for the happening had come and gone. Franz was beginning to feel that the caper (which, in and of itself, he was happy to think of as charming) had dragged on too long. So he gently took the brim of the bowler hat between two fingers, lifted it off Sabina's head with a smile, and laid it back on the wig stand. It was as though he were erasing the mustache a naughty child had drawn on a picture of the Virgin Mary.

For several more seconds she remained motionless, staring at herself in the mirror. Then Franz covered her with tender kisses and asked her once more to go with him in ten days to Palermo. This time she said yes unquestioningly, and he left.

He was in an excellent mood again. Geneva, which he had cursed all his life as the metropolis of boredom, now seemed beautiful and full of adventure. Outside in the street he looked back up at the studio's broad window. It was late spring and hot. All the windows were shaded with striped awnings. Franz walked to the park. At its far end the golden cupolas of the Orthodox church rose up like gilded cannonballs kept from imminent collapse and suspended in the air by some invisible power. Everything was beautiful. Then he went down to the embankment and took the public-transport boat to the north bank of the lake, where he lived.

2

Sabina was now by herself. She went back to the mirror, still in her underwear. She put the bowler hat back on her head and had a long look at herself. She was amazed at the number of years she had spent pursuing one lost moment.

Once, during a visit to her studio many years before, the bowler hat had caught Tomas's fancy. He set it on his head and looked at himself in the large mirror that, as in the Geneva studio, leaned against the wall. He wanted to see what he would have looked like as a nineteenth-century mayor. When Sabina started undressing, he put the hat on her head. There they stood in front of the mirror (they always stood in front of the mirror while she undressed), watching themselves. She stripped to her underwear but still had the hat on her head. And all at once she realized they were both excited by what they saw in the mirror.

What could have excited them so? A moment before, the hat on her head had seemed nothing but a joke. Was excitement really a mere step away from laughter?

Yes. When they looked at each other in the mirror that time, all she saw for the first few seconds was a comic situation. But suddenly the comic became veiled by excitement: the bowler hat no longer signified a joke; it signified violence—violence against Sabina, against her dignity as a woman. She saw her bare legs and thin panties with her pubic triangle showing through. The lingerie enhanced the charm of her femininity, while the hard masculine hat denied it, violated and ridiculed it. The fact that Tomas stood beside her fully dressed meant that the essence of what they both saw was far from good clean fun (if it had been fun he was after, he, too, would have had to strip and don a bowler hat); it was humiliation. But instead of spurning it she proudly, provocatively played it for all it was worth, as if submitting of her own free will to public rape; and suddenly, unable to wait any longer, she pulled Tomas down to the floor. The bowler hat rolled under the table, and they began thrashing about on the rug at the foot of the mirror.

But let us return to the bowler hat.

First, it was a vague reminder of a forgotten grandfather, the mayor of a small Bohemian town during the nineteenth century.

Second, it was a memento of her father. After the funeral her brother appropriated all their parents' property, and she, refusing out of sovereign contempt to fight for her rights, announced sarcastically that she was taking the bowler hat as her sole inheritance.

Third, it was a prop for her love games with Tomas.

Fourth, it was a sign of her originality, which she consciously cultivated. She could not take much with her when she emigrated, and taking this bulky, impractical thing meant giving up other, more practical ones.

Fifth, now that she was abroad the hat was a sentimental object. When she went to visit Tomas in Zurich, she took it along and had it on her head when he opened the hotel-room door. But then something she had not reckoned with happened: the hat, no longer jaunty or sexy, turned into a monument to time past. They were both touched. They made love as they never had before. This was no occasion for obscene games. For this meeting was not a continuation of their erotic rendezvous, each of which had been an opportunity to think up some new little vice; it was a recapitulation of time, a hymn to their common past, a sentimental summary of an unsentimental story that was disappearing in the distance.

The bowler hat was a motif in the musical composition that was Sabina's life. It returned again and again, each time with a different meaning, and all the meanings flowed through the bowler hat like water through a riverbed. I might call it Heraclitus' ("You can't step twice into the same river") riverbed. The bowler hat was a bed through which each time Sabina saw another river flow, another semantic river: each time the same object would give rise to a new meaning, though all former meanings would resonate (like an echo, like a parade of echoes) together with the new one. Each new experience would resound, each time enriching the harmony. The reason Tomas and Sabina were touched by the sight of the bowler hat in a Zurich hotel and made love almost in tears was that its black presence was not merely a reminder of their love games but also a *memento* of Sabina's father and of her grandfather, who lived in a century without airplanes and cars.

Now, perhaps, we are in a better position to understand the abyss separating Sabina and Franz: he listened eagerly to the story of her life and she was equally eager to hear the story of his, but although they had a clear understanding of the logical meaning of the words they exchanged, they failed to hear the semantic susurrus of the river flowing through them.

And so when she put on the bowler hat in his presence Franz felt uncomfortable, as if someone had spoken to him in a language he did not know. It was neither obscene nor sentimental, merely an incomprehensible gesture—what made him feel uncomfortable was its very lack of meaning.

While people are fairly young and the musical composition of their lives is still in its opening bars, they can go about writing it together and exchange motifs (the way Tomas and Sabina exchanged the motif of the bowler hat), but if they meet when they are older, like Franz and Sabina, their musical compositions are more or less complete, and every motif, every object, every word means something different to each of them.

If I were to make a record of all Sabina and Franz's conversations, I could compile a long lexicon of their misunderstandings. Let us be content, instead, with a short dictionary.

3

A Short Dictionary of Misunderstood Words

Woman: Being a woman is a fate Sabina did not choose. What we have not chosen we cannot consider either our merit or our failure. Sabina believed that she had to assume the correct attitude to her unchosen fate. To rebel against being born a woman seemed as foolish to her as to take pride in it.

During one of their first times together, Franz announced to her, in an oddly emphatic way, "Sabina, you are a *woman.*" She could not understand

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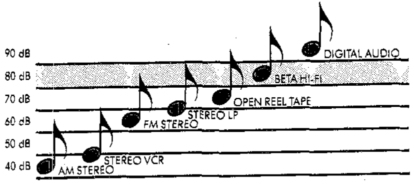

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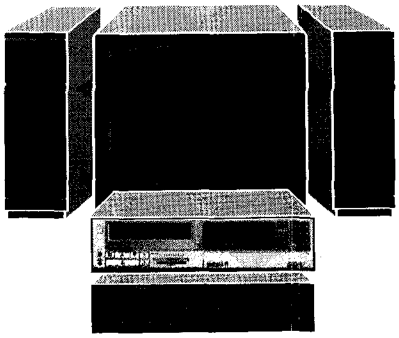

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why he accentuated the obvious with the solemnity of a Columbus who has just sighted land. Not until later did she understand that the word "woman," on which he had placed such uncommon emphasis, did not, in his eyes, signify one of the two human sexes; it represented a *value*. Not every woman was worthy of being called a woman.

But if Sabina was, in Franz's eyes, a *woman*, then what was his wife, Marie-Claude? More than twenty years earlier, several months after Franz met Marie-Claude, she had threatened to take her life if he abandoned her. Franz was bewitched by the threat. He was not particularly fond of her, but he was very much taken with her love. He felt himself unworthy of so great a love, and felt he owed her a low bow.

He bowed so low that he married her. And even though Marie-Claude never recaptured the emotional intensity that accompanied her suicide threat, in his heart he kept its memory alive with the thought that he must never hurt her and must always respect the woman in her.

It is an interesting formulation. Not "respect Marie-Claude" but "respect the woman in Marie-Claude."

But if Marie-Claude is herself a woman, then who is that other woman hiding in her, the one he must always respect? The Platonic ideal of a woman, perhaps?

No. His mother. It never would have occurred to him to say he respected the woman in his mother. He worshipped his mother and not some woman inside her. His mother and the Platonic ideal of womanhood were one and the same.

When he was twelve, she suddenly found herself alone, abandoned by Franz's father. The boy suspected something serious had happened, but his mother muted the drama with mild, insipid words so as not to upset him. The day his father left, Franz and his mother went into town together, and as they left home Franz noticed that her shoes did not match. He was in a quandary: he wanted to point out her mistake, but was afraid he would hurt her. So during the two hours they spent walking through the city together he kept his eyes fixed on her feet. It was then he had his first inkling of what it means to suffer.

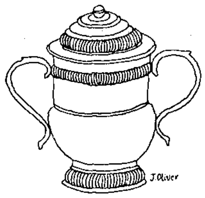
Fidelity and Betrayal: He loved her from the time he was a child until the time he accompanied her to the cemetery; he loved her in his memories as well. That is what made him feel that fidelity deserved pride of place among the virtues: fidelity gave a unity to lives that would otherwise splinter into thousands of fleeting impressions.

Franz often spoke about his mother to Sabina, perhaps even with a certain unconscious ulterior motive: he assumed that Sabina would be charmed by his ability to be faithful, that it would win her over.

What he did not know was that Sabina was charmed more by betrayal than by fidelity. The word "fidelity" reminded her of her father, a small-town puritan, who spent his Sundays painting away at canvases of woodland sunsets and roses in vases. Thanks to him, she started drawing as a child. When she was fourteen, she fell in love with a boy her age. Her father was so frightened that he would not let her out of the house by herself for a year. One day, he showed her some Picasso reproductions and made fun of them. If she couldn't love her fourteen-year-old schoolboy, she could at least love Cubism. After completing school, she went off to Prague with the euphoric feeling that now at last she could betray her home.

Betrayal. From tender youth we are told by father and teacher that betrayal is the most heinous offense imaginable. But what is betrayal? Betrayal means breaking ranks. Betrayal means breaking ranks and going off into the unknown. Sabina knew of nothing more magnificent than going off into the unknown.

Though a student at the Academy of Fine Arts, she was not allowed to paint like Picasso. It was the period when so-called Socialist Realism was prescribed, and the school manufactured portraits of Communist statesmen. Her longing to betray her father remained unsatisfied: Communism was merely another father, a father equally strict and limited, a father who forbade her love (the times were puritanical) and Picasso, too. And if she married a second-rate actor, it was only because he had a reputation for being eccentric and was unacceptable to both fathers.



Then her mother died. The day following her return to Prague from the funeral, she received a telegram saying that her father had taken his life because of grief.

Suddenly she felt pangs of conscience: Was it really so terrible that her father had painted vases filled with roses and hated Picasso? Was it really so reprehensible that he was afraid of his fourteen-year-old daughter's coming home pregnant? Was it really so laughable that he could not go on living without his wife?

And again she felt a longing to betray: betray her own betrayal. She announced to her husband (whom she now considered a difficult drunk rather than an eccentric) that she was leaving him.

But if we betray B, for whom we betrayed A, it does not necessarily follow that we thereby have placated A. The life of the divorcée painter did not in the least resemble the life of the parents she had betrayed. The first betrayal is irreparable. It calls forth a chain reaction of further betrayals, each of which takes us further and further away from the point of our original betrayal.

Music: For Franz, music was the art that came closest to Dionysian beauty, in the sense of intoxication. No one can get really drunk on a novel or a painting, but who can help getting drunk on Beethoven's Ninth, Bartók's Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion, or the Beatles' White Album? Franz made no distinction between "classical" music and "pop." He found the distinction old-hat and hypocritical. He loved rock as much as Mozart.

He considered music a liberating force: it liberated him from loneliness, introversion, the dust of the library; it opened the door of his body and allowed his soul to step out into the world to make friends. He loved to dance and regretted that Sabina did not share his passion.

They were sitting together at a restaurant, and loud music with a heavy beat poured out of a nearby speaker as they ate.

"It's a vicious circle," Sabina said. "People are going deaf because music is played louder and louder. But because they're going deaf it has to be played louder still."

"Don't you like music?" Franz asked.

"No," said Sabina, and then added, "though in a different era . . ." She was thinking of the days of Johann Sebastian Bach, when music was like a rose blooming on a boundless snow-covered plain of silence.

Noise masked as music had pursued

her since early childhood. During her years at the Academy of Fine Arts, students had been required to spend whole summer vacations at a youth camp. They lived in common quarters and worked together on a steelworks construction site. Music roared out of loudspeakers on the site from five in the morning to nine at night. She felt like crying, but the music was cheerful, and there was nowhere to hide—not in the latrine or under the bedclothes: everything was in range of the loudspeakers. The music was like a pack of hounds that had been sicked on her.

At the time, she had thought that only in the Communist world could such musical barbarism reign supreme. Abroad, she discovered that the transformation of music into noise was a planetary process by which mankind was entering the historical phase of total ugliness. The total ugliness to come had made itself felt first as omnipresent acoustical ugliness: cars, motorcycles, electric guitars, drills, loudspeakers, sirens. The omnipresence of visual ugliness would soon follow.

After dinner, they went upstairs to their room and made love, and as Franz fell asleep his thoughts began to lose coherence. He recalled the noisy music at dinner and said to himself, "Noise has one advantage. It drowns out words." And suddenly he realized that all his life he had done nothing but talk, write, lecture, concoct sentences, search for formulations and amend them, so in the end no words were precise, their meanings were obliterated, their content lost, they turned into trash, chaff, dust, sand; prowling through his brain, tearing at his head, they were his insomnia, his illness. And what he yearned for at that moment, vaguely but with all his might, was unbounded music, absolute sound, a pleasant and happy all-encompassing, overpowering, window-rattling din to engulf, once and for all, the pain, the futility, the vanity of words. Music was the negation of sentences, music was the anti-word. He yearned for one long embrace with Sabina, yearned never to say another sentence, another word, to let his orgasm fuse with the orgiastic thunder of music. And lulled by that blissful imaginary uproar, he fell asleep.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS: Living for Sabina meant seeing. Seeing is limited by two borders: strong light, which blinds, and total darkness. Perhaps that was what motivated Sabina's distaste for all extremism. Extremes mean borders beyond which life ends, and a passion for extremism, in art and in politics, is a veiled longing for death.

In Franz, the word "light" did *not* evoke the picture of a landscape basking in the soft glow of day; it evoked the source of light itself: the sun, a light bulb, a spotlight. Franz's associations were familiar metaphors: the sun of righteousness, the lambent flame of the intellect, and so on.

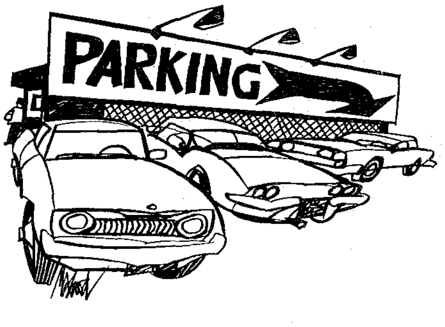
Darkness attracted him as much as light. He knew that nowadays turning out the light before making love was considered laughable, and so he always left a small lamp burning over the bed. At the moment he penetrated Sabina, however, he closed his eyes. The pleasure suffusing his body called for darkness. That darkness was pure, perfect, thoughtless, visionless; that darkness was without end, without borders; that darkness was the infinite we each carry within us. (Yes, if you're looking for infinity, just close your eyes!)

And at the moment he felt pleasure suffusing his body Franz himself disintegrated and dissolved into the infinity of his darkness, himself becoming infinite. But the larger a man grows in his own inner darkness, the more his outer form diminishes. A man with closed eyes is a wreck of a man. Then Sabina found the sight of Franz distasteful, and to avoid looking at him she, too, closed her eyes. But, for her, darkness did not mean infinity; for her, it meant a disagreement with what she saw, the negation of what was seen, the refusal to see.

4

SABINA once allowed herself to be taken along to a gathering of fellow-émigrés. As usual, they were hashing over whether they should or should not have taken up arms against the Russians. In the safety of emigration, they all naturally came out in favor of fighting. Sabina said, "Then why don't you go back and fight?"

That was not the thing to say. A man with artificially waved gray hair pointed a long index finger at her. "That's no way to talk. You're all responsible for what happened. You, too. How did you oppose the Communist regime? All you did was paint pictures. . . ."



Assessing the populace, checking up on it, is a principal and never-ending social activity in Communist countries. If a painter is to have an exhibition, an ordinary citizen to receive a visa to a country with a seacoast, a soccer player to join the national team, then a vast array of recommendations and reports must be garnered (from the concierge, colleagues, the police, the local Party organization, the pertinent trade union) and added up, weighed, and summarized by special officials. These reports have nothing to do with artistic talent, kicking ability, or maladies that respond well to salt sea air; they deal with one thing only: the "citizen's political profile" (in other words, what the citizen says, what he thinks, how he behaves, how he acquits himself at meetings or May Day parades). Because everything (day-to-day existence, promotion at work, vacations) depends on the outcome of the assessment process, everyone (whether he wants to play soccer for the national team, have an exhibition, or spend his holidays at the seaside) must behave in such a way as to deserve a favorable assessment.

That was what ran through Sabina's mind as she listened to the gray-haired man speak. He didn't care whether his fellow-countrymen were good kickers or painters (none of the Czechs at the émigré gathering ever showed any interest in what Sabina painted), only whether they had opposed Communism actively or just passively, really and truly or just for appearances' sake, from the very beginning or just since emigration.

Because she was a painter, she had an eye for detail and a memory for the physical characteristics of the people in Prague who had a passion for assessing the others. All of them had index fingers slightly longer than their middle fingers and pointed them at whomever they happened to be talking to. In fact, President Novotný, who had ruled the country for the fourteen years preceding 1968, sported the very same barber-induced gray waves and had the longest index finger of all the inhabitants of Central Europe.

When the distinguished émigré heard from the lips of a painter whose pictures he had never seen that he resembled Communist President Novotný, he turned scarlet, then white, then scarlet again, then white once more; he tried to say something, did not succeed, and fell silent. Everyone else kept silent until Sabina stood up and left.

It made her unhappy, and down in the street she asked herself why she should bother to maintain contact with Czechs. What bound her to them? The landscape? If each of them were asked to say what the name of his native country evoked in him, the images that came to mind would be so different as to rule out all possibility of unity.

Or the culture? But what was that? Music? Dvořák and Janáček? Yes. But what if a Czech had no feeling for music? Then the essence of being Czech vanished into thin air.

Or great men? Jan Hus? None of the people in that room had ever read a line of his works. The only thing they were all able to understand was the flames, the glory of the flames when he was burned at the stake, the glory of the ashes. So for them the essence of being Czech came down to ashes and nothing more. The only things that held them together were their defeats and the reproaches they addressed to one another.

She was walking fast. She was more disturbed by her own thoughts than by her break with the émigrés. She knew she was being unfair. There were other Czechs, after all, people quite different from the man with the long index finger. The embarrassed silence that followed her little speech did not by any means indicate they were all against her. No, they were probably bewildered by the sudden hatred, the lack of understanding they were all subjected to in emigration. Then why wasn't she sorry for them? Why didn't she see them for the woeful and abandoned creatures they were?

We know why. After she betrayed her father, life opened up before her, a long road of betrayals, each one attracting her as vice and victory. She *would not* keep ranks! She *refused* to keep ranks. Always with the same people, with the same speeches! That was why she was so stirred by her own injustice. But it was not an unpleasant feeling; quite the contrary. Sabina had the impression that she had just scored a victory and someone invisible was applauding her for it.

Then suddenly the intoxication gave way to anguish: The road had to end somewhere! Sooner or later she would have to put an end to her betrayals! Sooner or later she would have to stop herself!

It was evening and she was hurrying through the railway station. The train to Amsterdam was in. She found her coach. Guided by a friendly guard, she opened the door to her compartment and found Franz sitting on a *couchette*. He rose to greet her; she threw her arms around him and smothered him with kisses.

She had an overwhelming desire to tell him, like the most banal of women, Don't let me go, hold me tight, make me your plaything, your slave, be strong! But they were words she could not say.

The only thing she said when he released her from his embrace was "You don't know how happy I am to be with you." That was the most her reserved nature allowed her to express.

5

A Short Dictionary of Misunderstood Words (*continued*)

PARADES: People in Italy or France have it easy. When their parents force them to go to church, they get back at them by joining the Party (Communist, Maoist, Trotskyist, etc.). Sabina, however, was first sent to church by her father, then forced by him to attend meetings of the Communist Youth League. He was afraid of what would happen if she stayed away.

When she marched in the obligatory May Day parades, she could never keep in step, and the girl behind her would shout at her and purposely tread on her heels. When the time came to sing, she never knew the words of the songs and would merely open and close her mouth. But the other girls would notice and report her. From her youth on, she hated parades.

Franz had studied in Paris, and because he was extraordinarily gifted his scholarly career was assured from the time he was twenty. At twenty, he knew he would live out his life within the confines of his university office, one or two libraries, and two or three lecture halls. The idea of such a life made him feel suffocated. He learned to step out of his life the way one steps out of a house into the street.

And so as long as he lived in Paris he took part in every possible demonstration. How nice it was to celebrate something, demand something, protest against something, to be out in the open, to be with others. The parades

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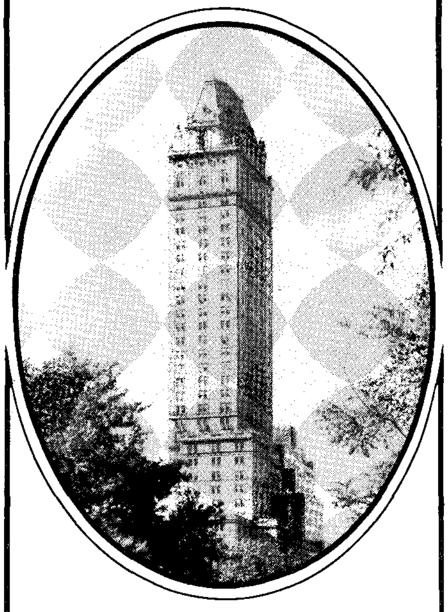

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filing down the Boulevard Saint-Germain or from the Place de la République to the Bastille fascinated him. He saw the marching, shouting crowd as the image of Europe and its history. Europe was the Grand March. The march from revolution to revolution, from struggle to struggle, ever onward.

I might put it another way: Franz felt his book life to be unreal. He yearned for real life, for the touch of people walking side by side with him, for their shouts. It never occurred to him that what he considered unreal (the work he did in the solitude of the office or library) was in fact his real life, whereas the parades he imagined to be reality were nothing but theatre, dance, carnival—in other words, a dream.

During her student years, Sabina lived in a dormitory. On May Day, all the students had to report early in the morning for the parade. Student officials would comb the building to insure that no one was missing. Sabina hid in the lavatory. Not until long after the building was empty would she go back to her room. It was quieter than anywhere she could remember. The only sound was the parade music echoing in the distance. It was as though she had found refuge inside a shell and the only sound she could hear was the sea of an inimical world.

A year or two after emigrating, she happened to be in Paris on the anniversary of the Russian invasion of her country. A protest march had been scheduled, and she felt driven to take part. Fists raised high, the young Frenchmen shouted out slogans condemning Soviet imperialism. She liked the slogans, but to her surprise she found herself unable to shout along with them. She lasted no more than a few minutes in the parade.

When she told her French friends about it, they were amazed. "You mean you don't want to fight the occupation of your country?" She would have liked to tell them that behind Communism, Fascism, behind all occupations and invasions, lurks a more basic, pervasive evil, and that the image of that evil was a parade of people marching by with raised fists and shouting identical syllables in unison. But she knew she would never be able to make them understand. Embarrassed, she changed the subject.

The Beauty of New York: Franz and Sabina would walk the streets of New York for hours at a time. The view changed with each step, as if they were following a winding mountain path surrounded by breathtaking scenery: a young man kneeling in the middle of the sidewalk praying; a few steps away, a beautiful black woman leaning against a tree; a man in a black suit directing an invisible orchestra while crossing the street; a fountain spurting water and a group of construction workers sitting on the rim eating lunch; strange iron ladders running up and down buildings with ugly red façades, so ugly that they were beautiful; and, next door, a huge glass skyscraper backed by another, itself topped by a small Arabian pleasure dome with turrets, galleries, and gilded columns.

She was reminded of her paintings. There, too, incongruous things came together: a steelworks construction site superimposed on a kerosene lamp; an old-fashioned lamp with a painted-glass shade shattered into tiny splinters and rising up over a desolate landscape of marshland.

Franz said, "Beauty in the European sense has always had a premeditated quality to it. We've always had an aesthetic intention and a long-range plan. That's what enabled Western man to spend decades building a Gothic cathedral or a Renaissance piazza. The beauty of New York rests on a completely different base. It's unintentional. It arose independent of human design, like a stalagmitic cavern. Forms which are in themselves quite ugly turn up fortuitously, without design, in such incredible surroundings that they sparkle with a sudden wondrous poetry."

Sabina said, "Unintentional beauty. Yes. Another way of putting it might be 'beauty by mistake.' Before beauty disappears entirely from the earth, it will go on existing for a while by mistake. 'Beauty by mistake'—the final phase in the history of beauty."

And she recalled her first mature painting, which came into being because some red paint had dripped on it by mistake. Yes, her paintings were based on "beauty by mistake," and New York was the secret but authentic homeland of her painting.

RECIPES
Judith Shahn

Franz said, "Perhaps New York's unintentional beauty is much richer and more varied than the excessively strict and composed beauty of human design. But it's not our European beauty. It's an alien world."

Didn't they then at last agree on something?

No. There is a difference. Sabina was very much attracted by the alien quality of New York's beauty. Franz found it fascinating but frightening; it made him feel homesick for Europe.

Sabina's Country: Sabina understood Franz's distaste for America. He was the embodiment of Europe: his mother was Viennese, his father French, and he himself was Swiss.

Franz greatly admired Sabina's country. Whenever she told him about herself and her friends from home, Franz heard the words "prison," "persecution," "enemy tanks," "emigration," "pamphlets," "banned books," "banned exhibitions," and he felt a curious mixture of envy and nostalgia.

He made a confession to Sabina. "A philosopher once wrote that everything in my work is unverifiable speculation and called me a 'pseudo-Socrates.' I felt terribly humiliated and made a furious response. And just think, that laughable episode was the greatest conflict I've ever experienced! The pinnacle of the dramatic possibilities available to my life! We live in two different dimensions, you and I. You came into my life like Gulliver entering the land of the Lilliputians."

Sabina protested. She said that conflict, drama, and tragedy didn't mean a thing; there was nothing inherently valuable in them, nothing deserving of respect or admiration. What was truly enviable was Franz's work and the fact that he had the peace and quiet to devote himself to it.

Franz shook his head. "When a society is rich, its people don't need to work with their hands; they can devote themselves to activities of the spirit. We have more and more universities and more and more students. If students are going to earn degrees, they've got to come up with dissertation topics. And since dissertations can be written about everything under the sun, the number of topics is infinite. Sheets of paper covered with words pile up in archives sadder than cemeteries, because no one ever visits them, not even on All Souls' Day. Culture is perishing in overproduction, in an avalanche of words, in the madness of quantity. That's why one banned book in your former country means infinitely more than the billions of words spewed out by our universities."

It is in this spirit that we may understand Franz's weakness for revolution. First he sympathized with Cuba, then with China, and when the cruelty of their regimes began to appall him he resigned himself with a sigh to a sea of words with no weight and no resemblance to life. He became a professor in Geneva (where there are no demonstrations), and in a burst of abnegation (in womanless, paradeless solitude) he published several scholarly books, all of which received considerable acclaim. Then one day along came Sabina. She was a revelation. She came from a land where revolutionary illusion had long since faded but where the thing he admired most in revolution remained: life on a large scale; a life of risk, daring, and the danger of death. Sabina had renewed his faith in the grandeur of human endeavor. Superimposing the painful drama of her country on her person, he found her even more beautiful.

The trouble was that Sabina had no love for that drama. The words "prison," "persecution," "banned books," "occupation," "tanks" were ugly, without the slightest trace of romance. The only word that evoked in her a sweet, nostalgic memory of her homeland was the word "cemetery."

CEMETERY: Cemeteries in Bohemia are like gardens. The graves are covered with grass and colorful flowers. Modest tombstones are lost in the greenery. When the sun goes down, the cemetery sparkles with tiny candles. It looks as though the dead are dancing at a children's ball. Yes, a children's ball, because the dead are as innocent as children. No matter how brutal life becomes, peace always reigns in the cemetery. Even in wartime, in Hitler's time, in Stalin's time, through all occupations. When she felt low, she would get into the car, leave Prague far behind, and walk through one or another of the country cemeteries she loved so well. Against a backdrop of blue hills, they were as beautiful as a lullaby.

For Franz, a cemetery was an ugly dump of stones and bones.

6

"I'D never drive. I'm scared stiff of accidents! Even if they don't kill you, they mark you for life!" And, so saying, the sculptor made an instinctive grab for the finger he had nearly chopped off one day while whittling away at a wood statue. It was a miracle the finger had been saved.

"What do you mean?" said Marie-Claude in a raucous voice. She was in top form. "I was in a serious accident once, and I wouldn't have missed it for the world. And I've never had more fun than when I was in that hospital! I couldn't sleep a wink, so I just read and read, day and night."

They all looked at her in amazement. She basked in it. Franz reacted with a mixture of disgust (he knew that after the accident in question his wife had fallen into a deep depression and complained incessantly) and admiration (her ability to transform everything she experienced was a sign of true vitality).

"It was there that I began to divide books into day books and night books," she went on. "Really, there are books meant for daytime reading and books that can be read only at night."

Now they all looked at her in amazement and admiration—all, that is, but the sculptor, who was still holding his finger and wrinkling his face at the memory of the accident.

Marie-Claude turned to him and asked, "Which category would you put Stendhal in?"

The sculptor had not heard the question and shrugged his shoulders uncomfortably. An art critic standing next to him said he thought of Stendhal as daytime reading.

Marie-Claude shook her head and said in her raucous voice, "No, no, you're wrong! You're wrong! Stendhal is a night author!"

Franz's participation in the debate on night art and day art was disturbed by the fact that he was expecting Sabina to show up at any minute. They had spent many days pondering whether or not she should accept the invitation to this cocktail party. It was a party Marie-Claude was giving for all painters and sculptors who had ever exhibited in her private gallery. Ever since Sabina had met Franz, she had avoided his wife. But because they feared being found out, they came to the conclusion that it would be more

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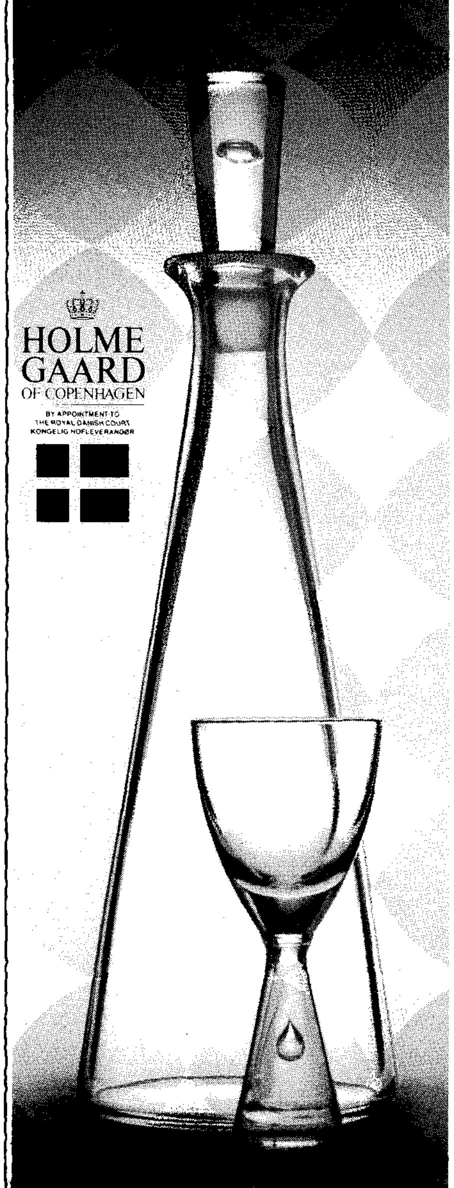

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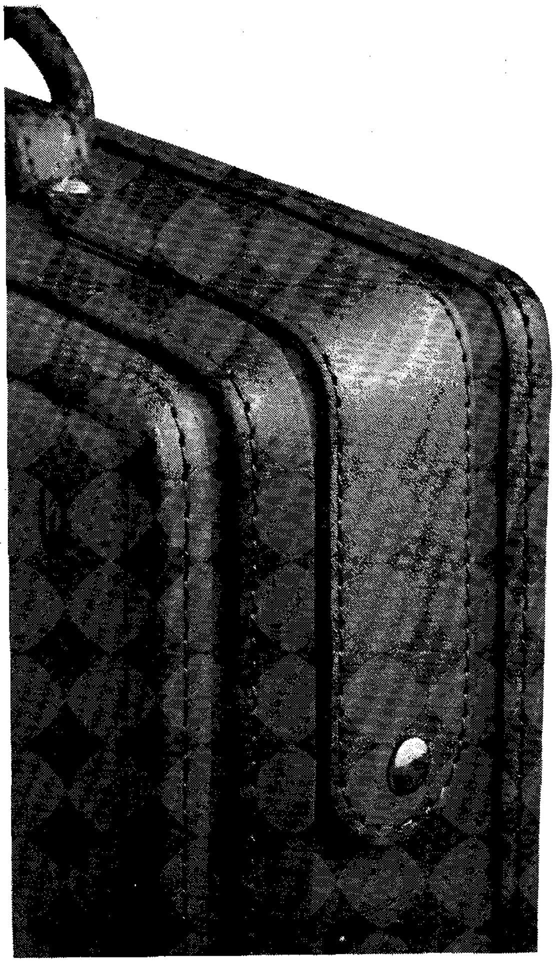

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natural and therefore less suspicious for her to come.

While throwing unobtrusive looks in the direction of the entrance hall, Franz heard his eighteen-year-old daughter, Marie-Anne, holding forth at the other end of the room. Excusing himself from the group presided over by his wife, he made his way to the group presided over by his daughter. Some were in chairs, others standing, but Marie-Anne was cross-legged on the floor. Franz was certain that Marie-Claude would soon switch to the carpet on her side of the room, too. Sitting on the floor when you had guests was at the time a gesture signifying simplicity, informality, liberal politics, hospitality, and a Parisian way of life. The passion with which Marie-Claude sat on all floors was such that Franz began to worry she would take to sitting on the floor of the shop where she bought her cigarettes.

"What are you working on now, Alain?" Marie-Anne asked the man at whose feet she was sitting.

Alain was so naïve and sincere as to try to give the gallery owner's daughter an honest answer. He started explaining his new approach to her—a combination of photography and oil—but he had scarcely got through three sentences when Marie-Anne began whistling a tune. The painter was speaking slowly and with great concentration and did not hear the whistling.

"Will you tell me why you're whistling?" Franz whispered.

"Because I don't like to hear people talk about politics," she answered out loud.

And in fact two men standing in the same circle were discussing the coming elections in France. Marie-Anne, who felt it her duty to direct the proceedings, asked the men whether they were planning to go to the Rossini opera an Italian company was putting on in Geneva the following week. Meanwhile, Alain, the painter, sank into greater and greater detail about his new approach to painting. Franz was ashamed for his daughter. To put her in her place, he announced that whenever she went to the opera she complained terribly of boredom.

"You're awful," said Marie-Anne, trying to punch him in the stomach from a sitting position. "The star tenor is so handsome. So handsome. I've seen him twice now, and I'm in love with him."

Franz could not get over how much

like her mother his daughter was. Why couldn't she be like him? But there was nothing he could do about it. She was not like him. How many times had he heard Marie-Claude proclaim she was in love with this or that painter, singer, writer, politician, and once even with a racing cyclist? Of course, it was all mere cocktail-party rhetoric, but he could not help recalling now and then that more than twenty years ago she had gone about saying the same thing about him and threatening him with suicide to boot.

At that point, Sabina entered the room. Marie-Claude walked up to her. While Marie-Anne went on about Rossini, Franz trained his attention on what the two women were saying. After a few friendly words of greeting, Marie-Claude lifted the ceramic pendant from Sabina's neck and said in a very loud voice, "What is that? How ugly!"

Those words made a deep impression on Franz. They were not meant to be combative; the raucous laughter immediately following them made it clear that by rejecting the pendant Marie-Claude did not wish to jeopardize her friendship with Sabina. But it was not the kind of thing she usually said.

"I made it myself," said Sabina.

"That pendant is ugly, really!" Marie-Claude repeated very loudly. "You shouldn't wear it."

Franz knew that his wife didn't care whether the pendant was ugly or not. An object was ugly if she willed it ugly, beautiful if she willed it beautiful. Pendants worn by her friends were a priori beautiful. And even if she did find them ugly, she would never say so, because flattery had long since become second nature to her.

Why, then, did she decide that the pendant Sabina had made herself was ugly?

Franz suddenly saw the answer plainly: Marie-Claude proclaimed Sabina's pendant ugly because she could afford to do so.

Or, to be more precise: Marie-Claude proclaimed Sabina's pendant ugly to make it clear that she could afford to tell Sabina her pendant was ugly.

Sabina's exhibition the year before had not been particularly successful, so Marie-Claude did not set great store by Sabina's favor. Sabina, however, had every reason to set store by Marie-Claude's. Yet that was not at all evident from her behavior.

Yes, Franz saw it plainly: Marie-Claude had taken advantage of the

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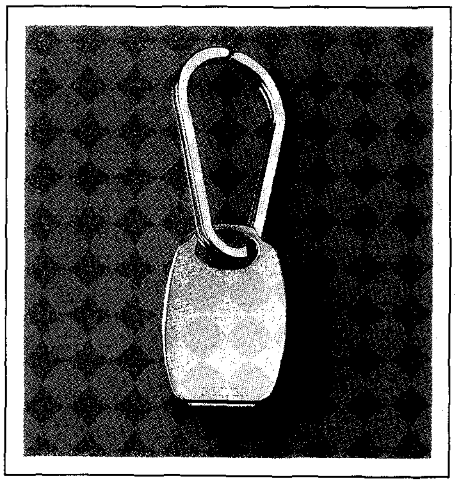

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occasion to make it clear to Sabina (and others) what the real balance of power was between the two of them.

7

A SHORT DICTIONARY OF MISUNDERSTOOD WORDS (*concluded*)

THE OLD CHURCH IN AMSTERDAM: There are houses running along one side of the street, and behind the large ground-floor shopfront windows all the whores have little rooms and plushly pillowed armchairs in which they sit up close to the glass wearing bras and panties. They look like big, bored cats.

On the other side of the street is a gigantic Gothic cathedral dating from the fourteenth century.

Between the whores' world and God's world, like a river dividing two empires, stretches an intense smell of urine.

Inside the Old Church, all that is left of the Gothic style is the high, bare white walls, the columns, the vaulting, and the windows. There is not a single image on the walls, not a single piece of statuary anywhere. The church is as empty as a gymnasium, except in the very center, where several rows of chairs have been arranged in a large square around a miniature podium for the minister. Behind the chairs are wooden booths, stalls for wealthy burghers.

The chairs and stalls seem to have been placed there without the slightest concern for the shape of the walls or the position of the columns, as if wishing to express their indifference to or disdain for Gothic architecture. Centuries ago, Calvinist faith turned the cathedral into a hangar, its only function being to keep the prayers of the faithful safe from rain and snow.

Franz was fascinated by it: the Grand March of History had passed through this gigantic hall!

Sabina recalled how, after the Communist coup, all the castles in Bohemia were nationalized and many of them turned into manual-training centers, retirement homes, and also cowsheds. She had visited one of the cowsheds: hooks for iron rings had been hammered into the stucco walls, and cows tied to the rings gazed dreamily out the windows at the castle grounds, now overrun by chickens.

"It's the emptiness of it all that fascinates me," said Franz. "People collect altars, statues, paintings, chairs, carpets, and books, and then comes a time of joyful relief and they throw it all out like so much refuse from yesterday's dinner table. Can't you just picture Hercules' broom sweeping out this cathedral?"

"The poor had to stand, while the rich had stalls," said Sabina, pointing to them. "But there was something that bound the bankers to the beggars: a hatred of beauty."

"What is beauty?" said Franz, and he saw himself attending a recent gallery preview at his wife's side, and at her insistence. The endless vanity of speeches and words, the vanity of culture, the vanity of art.

When Sabina was working in the student brigade, her soul poisoned by the cheerful marches issuing incessantly from the loudspeakers, she borrowed a motorcycle one Sunday and headed for the hills. She stopped at a tiny remote village she had never seen before, leaned the motorcycle against the church, and went in. A Mass happened to be in progress. Religion was persecuted by the regime, and most people gave the church a wide berth. The only people in the pews were old men and old women, because they did not fear the regime. They feared only death.

The priest intoned words in a singsong voice, and the people repeated them after him in unison. It was a litany. The same words kept coming back, like a wanderer who cannot tear his eyes away from the countryside or like a man who cannot take leave of life. She sat in one of the last pews, closing her eyes to hear the music of the words, opening them to stare up at the blue vault dotted with large gold stars. She was entranced.

What she had unexpectedly met there in the village church was not God; it was beauty. She knew perfectly well that neither the church nor the litany was beautiful in and of itself, but they were beautiful compared to the construction site, where she spent her days amid the racket of the loudspeaker music. The Mass was beautiful because it appeared to her in a sudden, mysterious revelation as a world betrayed.

From that time on she had known that beauty is a world betrayed. The only way we can encounter it is if its persecutors have overlooked it somewhere. Beauty hides behind the scenes of the May Day parade. If we want to find it, we must demolish the scenery.

"This is the first time I've ever been fascinated by a church," said Franz.

It was neither Protestantism nor asceticism that made him so enthusiastic;

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it was something else, something highly personal, something he did not dare discuss with Sabina. He thought he heard a voice telling him to seize Hercules' broom and sweep all of Marie-Claude's previews, all of Marie-Anne's singers, all lectures and symposia, all useless speeches, vain words—sweep them all out of his life. The great empty space of Amsterdam's Old Church had appeared to him in a sudden and mysterious revelation as the image of his own liberation.

STRENGTH: Stroking Franz's arms in bed in one of the many hotels where they made love, Sabina said, "The muscles you have! They're unbelievable!"

Franz took pleasure in her praise. He climbed out of bed, got down on his haunches, grabbed a heavy oak chair by one leg, and lifted it slowly into the air. "You never have to be afraid," he said. "I can protect you, no matter what. I used to be a judo champion."

When he raised the hand with the heavy chair above his head, Sabina said, "It's good to know you're so strong."

But deep down she said to herself, Franz may be strong, but his strength is directed outward; when it comes to the people he lives with, the people he loves, he's weak. Franz's weakness is called goodness. Franz would never give Sabina orders. He would never command her, as Tomas had, to lay the mirror on the floor and walk back and forth on it naked. Not that he lacked sensuality: he simply lacked the strength to give orders. There are things that can be accomplished only by violence. Physical love is unthinkable without violence.

Sabina watched Franz walk across the room with the chair above his head; the scene struck her as grotesque and filled her with an odd sadness.

Franz set the chair down on the floor opposite Sabina and sat in it. "I enjoy being strong, of course," he said, "but what good do these muscles do me in Geneva? They're like an ornament, a peacock feather. I've never fought anyone in my life."

Sabina proceeded with her melancholy musings: What if she had a man who ordered her about? A man who wanted to master her? How long would she put up with him? Not five minutes! From which it follows that no man was right for her. Strong or weak.

"Why don't you ever use your strength on me?" she said.

"Because love means renouncing strength," said Franz softly.

Sabina realized two things: first, that Franz's words were noble and just; second, that they disqualified him from her love life.

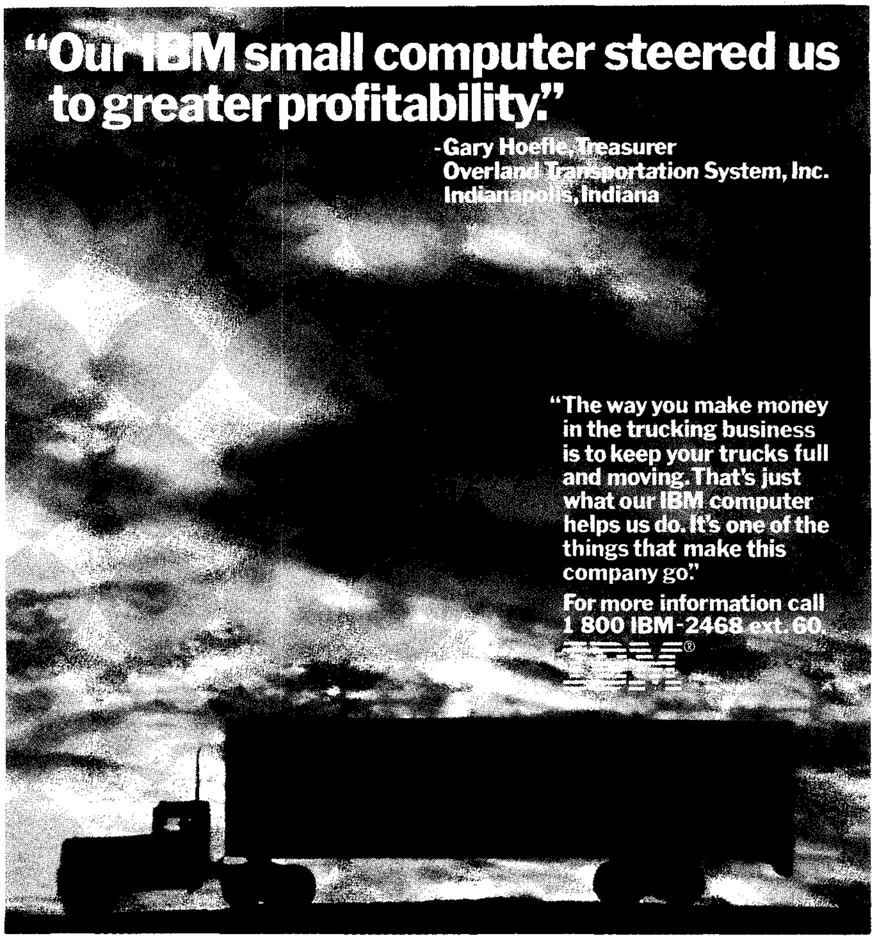
Living in Truth: Such is the formula set forth by Kafka somewhere in the diaries or letters. Franz couldn't quite remember where. But it captivated him. What does it mean to live in truth? Putting it negatively is easy enough: it means not lying, not hiding, and not dissembling. From the time he met Sabina, however, Franz had been living in lies. He told his wife about nonexistent conferences in Amsterdam and lectures in Madrid; he was afraid to walk through the streets of Geneva with Sabina. And he enjoyed the lying and hiding; it was all so new to him. He was as excited as a teacher's pet who has plucked up the courage to play truant.

For Sabina, living in truth, lying neither to ourselves nor to others, was possible only away from the public: the moment someone keeps an eye on what we do, we involuntarily make allowances for that eye, and nothing we do is truthful. Having a public, keeping a public in mind, means living in lies. Sabina despised literature in which people give away all kinds of intimate secrets about themselves and their friends. A man who loses his privacy loses everything, Sabina thought. And a man who gives it up of his own free will is a monster. That was why Sabina did not suffer in the least from having to keep her love secret. On the contrary, only by doing so could she live in truth.

Franz, on the other hand, was certain that the division of life into private and public spheres is the source of all lies: a person is one thing in private and something quite different in public. For Franz, living in truth meant breaking down the barriers between the private and the public. He was fond of quoting André Breton on the desirability of living "in a glass house" into which everyone can look and there are no secrets.

When he heard his wife telling Sabina, "That pendant is ugly!" he knew he could no longer live in lies and had to stand up for Sabina. He had not done so only because he was afraid of betraying their secret love.

The day after the cocktail party, he was supposed to go to Rome with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Sabina for the weekend. He could not get "That pendant is ugly!" out of his mind, and it made him see Marie-Claude in a completely new light. Her aggressiveness—invulnerable, noisy, and full of vitality—relieved him of the burden of goodness he had patiently borne all twenty-three years of their marriage. He recalled the enormous inner space of the Old Church in Amsterdam and again felt the strange *incomprehensible ecstasy that void had* evoked in him.

He was packing his overnight bag when Marie-Claude came into the room, chatting about the guests at the party, energetically endorsing the views of some and laughing off the views of others.

Franz looked at her for a long time and said, "There isn't any conference in Rome."

She did not see the point. "Then why are you going?"

"I've had a mistress for nine months," he said. "I don't want to meet her in Geneva. That's why I've been travelling so much. I thought it was time you knew about it."

After the first few words he lost his nerve. He turned away so as not to see the despair on Marie-Claude's face, the despair he expected his words to produce.

After a short pause he heard her say, "Yes, I think it's time I knew about it."

Her voice was so firm that Franz turned in her direction. She did not look at all disturbed; in fact, she looked like the very same woman who had said the day before in a raucous voice, "That pendant is ugly!"

She continued, "Now that you've plucked up the courage to tell me you've been deceiving me for nine months, do you think you can tell me who she is?"

He had always reminded himself he had no right to hurt Marie-Claude and should respect the woman in her. But where had the woman in her gone? In other words, what had happened to the mother image he mentally linked with his wife? His mother, sad and wounded, his mother, wearing unmatched shoes, had departed from Marie-Claude—or perhaps not; perhaps she had never been inside Marie-Claude at all. The whole thing came to him in a flash of hatred.

"I have no reason to hide it from you," he said.

If he had not succeeded in wounding her with his infidelity, he was certain the revelation of who her rival

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was would do the trick. Looking her straight in the eye, he told her about Sabina.

A while later, he met Sabina at the airport. As the plane gained altitude, he felt lighter and lighter. At last, he told himself, after nine months he was living in truth.

8

SABINA felt as though Franz had pried open the door of their privacy. As though she were peering into the heads of Marie-Claude, of Marie-Anne, of Alain, the painter, of the sculptor who held on to his finger—of all the people she knew in Geneva. Now she would willy-nilly become the rival of a woman who did not interest her in the least. Franz would ask for a divorce, and she would take Marie-Claude's place in his large conjugal bed. Everyone would follow the process from a greater or lesser distance, and she would be forced to playact before them all; instead of being Sabina, she would have to act the role of Sabina, decide how best to act the role. Once her love had been publicized, it would gain weight, become a burden. Sabina cringed at the very thought of it.

They had supper at a restaurant in Rome. She drank her wine in silence.

"You're not angry, are you?" Franz asked.

She assured him she was not. She was still confused and unsure whether to be happy or not. She recalled the time they met in the sleeping compartment of the Amsterdam express, the time she had wanted to go down on her knees before him and beg him to hold her, squeeze her, never let her go. She had longed to come to the end of the dangerous road of betrayals. She had longed to call a halt to it all.

Try as she might to intensify that longing, summon it to her aid, lean on it, the feeling of distaste only grew stronger.

They walked back to the hotel through the streets of Rome. Because the Italians around them were making a racket, shouting and gesticulating, they could walk along in silence without hearing their silence.

Sabina spent a long time washing in the bathroom; Franz waited for her under the blanket. As always, the small lamp was lit.

When she came out, she turned it off. It was the first time she had done so. Franz should have paid better attention. He did not notice it, because

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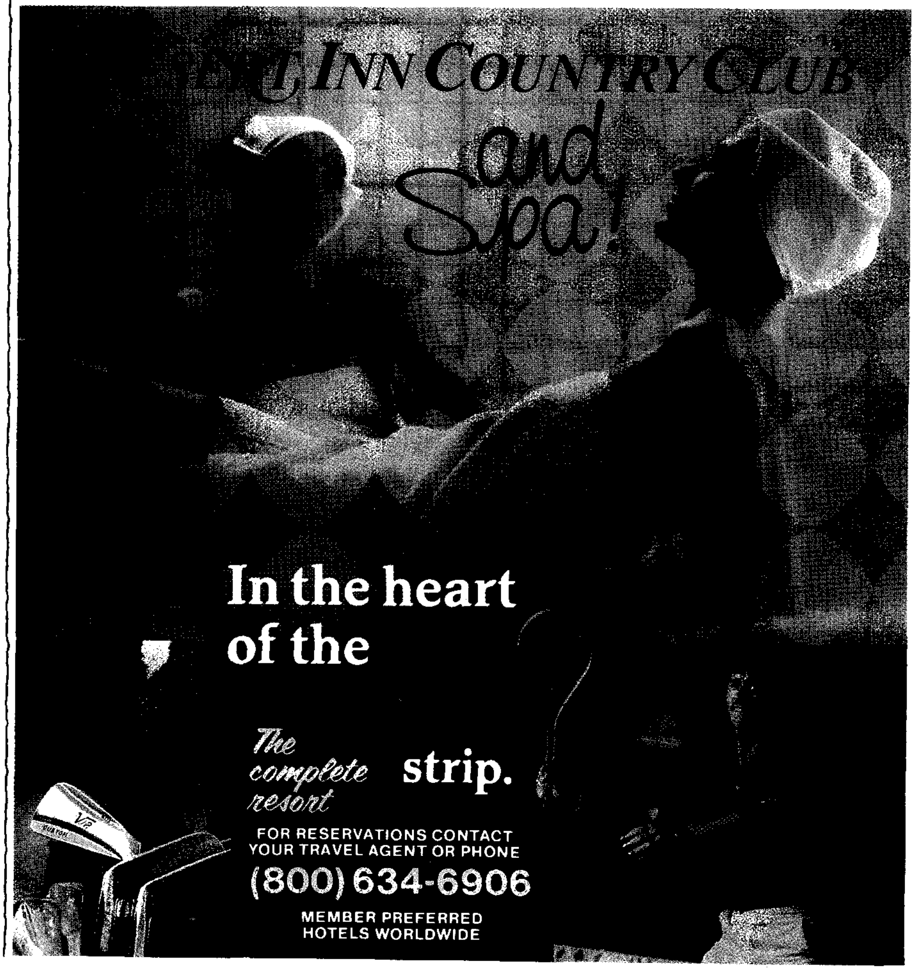

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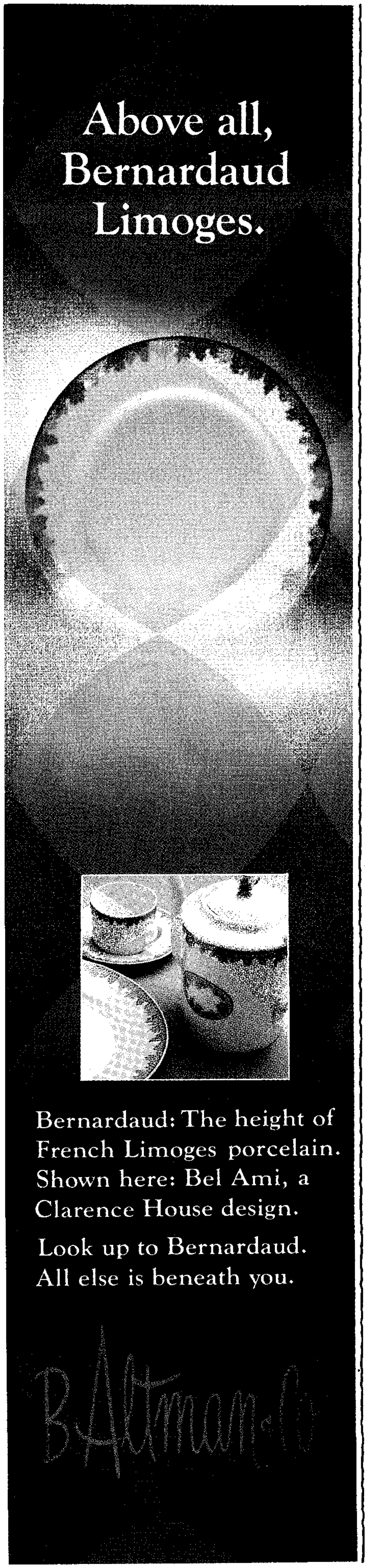
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light did not mean anything to him. As we know, he made love with his eyes shut.

In fact, it was his closed eyes that made Sabina turn out the light. She could not stand those lowered eyelids a moment longer. The eyes, as the saying goes, are the windows of the soul. Franz's body, which thrashed about on top of hers with closed eyes, was therefore a body without a soul. It was like a newborn animal, still blind and whimpering for the teat. Muscular Franz in coitus was like a gigantic puppy suckling at her breasts. He actually had her nipple in his mouth as if he were sucking milk! The idea that he was a mature man below and a suckling infant above, that she was therefore having intercourse with a baby, bordered on the disgusting. No, she would never again see his body moving desperately over hers, would never again offer him her breast, bitch to whelp. Today was the last time, irrevocably the last time!

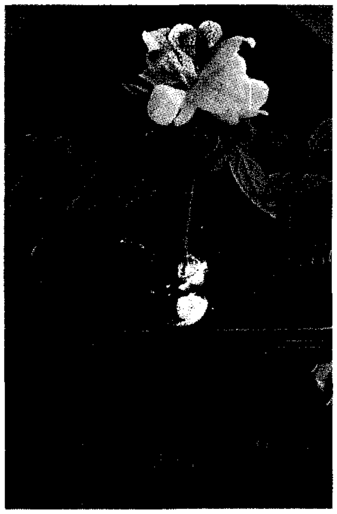
She knew, of course, that she was being supremely unfair, that Franz was the best man she had ever had—he was intelligent, he understood her paintings, he was handsome and good—but the more she thought about it, the more she longed to ravish his intelligence, defile his kindheartedness, and violate his powerless strength.

That night she made love to him with greater frenzy than ever before, aroused by the realization that this was the last time. Making love, she was far, far away. Once more she heard the golden horn of betrayal beckoning her in the distance, and she knew she would not hold out. She sensed an expanse of freedom before her, and the boundlessness of it excited her. She made mad, unrestrained love to Franz as she never had before.

Franz sobbed as he lay on top of her; he was certain he understood: Sabina had been quiet all through dinner and said not a word about his decision, but this was her answer. She had made a clear show of her joy, her passion, her consent, her desire to live with him forever.

He felt like a rider galloping off into a magnificent void, a void of no wife, no daughter, no household, the magnificent void swept clean by Hercules' broom, a magnificent void he would fill with his love.

Each was riding the other like a horse, and both were galloping off into the distance of their desires, drunk on the betrayals that freed them. Franz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was riding Sabina and had betrayed his wife; Sabina was riding Franz and had betrayed Franz.

9

FOR twenty years Franz had seen his mother—a poor, weak creature who needed his protection—in his wife. This image was deeply rooted in him, and he could not rid himself of it in two days. On the way home his conscience began to bother him; he was afraid that Marie-Claude had fallen apart after he left and that he would find her terribly sick at heart. Stealthily he unlocked the door and went into his room. He stood there for a moment and listened. Yes, she was at home. After a moment's hesitation he went into her room, ready to greet her as usual.

"What?" she exclaimed, raising her eyebrows in mock surprise. "You? Here?"

"Where else can I go?" he wanted to say (genuinely surprised), but he said nothing.

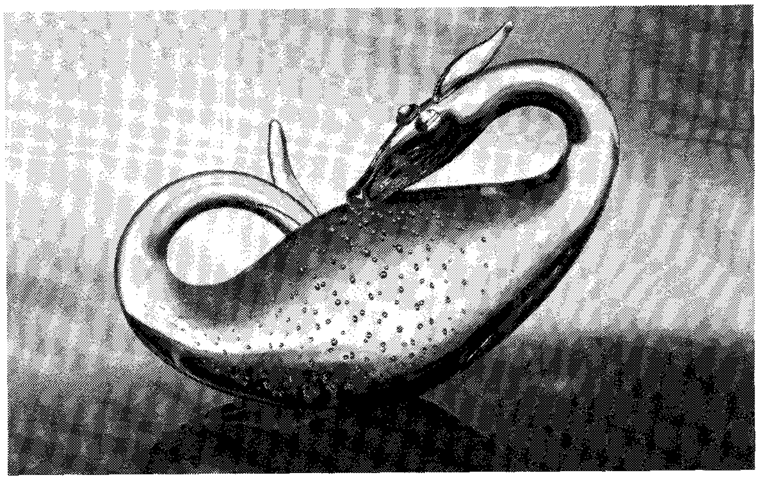
"Let's set the record straight, shall we? I have nothing against your moving in with her at once."

When he made his confession on the day he left for Rome, he had no precise plan of action. He expected to come home and talk it all out in a friendly atmosphere so as not to harm Marie-Claude any more than necessary. It never occurred to him that she would calmly and coolly urge him to leave.

Even though it facilitated things, he could not help feeling disappointed. He had always been afraid of wounding her and had voluntarily stuck to a stultifying discipline of monogamy, and now, after some twenty years, he suddenly learned that it had all been superfluous and that he had given up scores of women because of a misunderstanding!

That afternoon, he gave his lecture, then went straight to Sabina's from the university. He had decided to ask her whether he could spend the night. He rang the doorbell, but no one answered. He went and sat at the café across the street and stared long and hard at the entrance to her building.

Evening came, and he did not know where to turn. All his life he had shared his bed with Marie-Claude. If he went home to Marie-Claude, where should he sleep? He could, of course, make up a bed on the sofa in the next room. But wouldn't that be merely an eccentric gesture? Wouldn't it look like a sign of ill will? He wanted to



The courtly dragon

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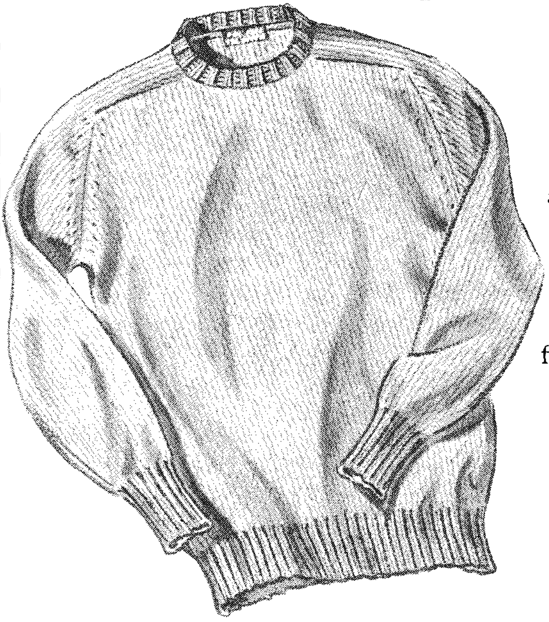

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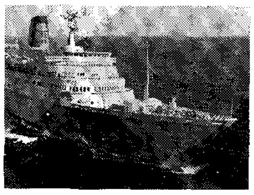

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remain friendly with her, after all! Yet, getting into bed with her was out of the question. He could just hear her asking him ironically why he didn't prefer Sabina's bed. He took a room in a hotel.

The next day, he rang Sabina's doorbell morning, noon, and night.

The day after, he paid a visit to the concierge, who had no information and referred him to the owner of the flat. He phoned her and found out that Sabina had given notice two days before.

During the next few days, he returned at regular intervals, still hoping to find her in, but one day he found the door open and three men in overalls loading the furniture and paintings into a van parked outside.

He asked them where they were taking the furniture.

They replied that they were under strict instructions not to reveal the address.

He was about to offer them a few francs for the secret address when suddenly he felt he lacked the strength to do it. His grief had broken him utterly. He understood nothing, had no idea what had happened; all he knew was that he had been waiting for it to happen ever since he had met Sabina. What must be must be. Franz did not oppose it.

He found a small flat for himself in the old part of town. When he knew his wife and daughter were away, he went back to his former home to fetch his clothes and most essential books. He was careful to remove nothing that Marie-Claude might miss.

One day, he saw her through the window of a café. She was sitting with two women, and her face, long riddled with wrinkles from her unbridled gift for grimaces, was in a state of animation. The women were listening closely and laughing continually. Franz could not get over the feeling that she was telling them about him. Surely she knew that Sabina had disappeared from Geneva at the very time Franz decided to live with her. What a funny story it would make! He was not the least bit surprised at becoming a butt to his wife's friends.

When he got home to his new flat, where every hour he could hear the bells of Saint-Pierre, he found that the department store had delivered a new desk he had bought. He immediately forgot about Marie-Claude and her friends. He even forgot about Sabina for the time being. He sat down at the desk. He was glad to have picked it out himself. For twenty years he had lived among furniture not of his own choosing. Marie-Claude had taken care of everything. At last he had ceased to be a little boy; for the first time in his life, he was on his own. The next day, he hired a carpenter to make a bookcase for him. He spent several days designing it and deciding where it should stand.

And at some point he realized, to his great surprise, that he was not particularly unhappy. Sabina's physical presence was much less important than he had suspected. What was important was the golden footprint, the magic footprint that she had left on his life and that no one could ever remove. Just before disappearing from his horizon, she had slipped him Hercules' broom and he had used it to sweep everything he despised out of his life. A sudden happiness, a feeling of bliss, the joy that came of freedom and a new life—these were the gifts she had left him.

Actually, he had always preferred the unreal to the real. Just as he felt better at demonstrations (which, as I have pointed out, are all playacting and dreams) than in a lecture hall full of students, so he was happier with Sabina the invisible goddess than with the Sabina who had accompanied him throughout the world and whose love he constantly feared losing. By giving him the unexpected freedom of a man living on his own, she provided him with a halo of seductiveness. He became very attractive to women, and one of his students fell in love with him.

And so within an amazingly short period the backdrop of his life had changed completely. Until recently he had lived in a large upper-middle-class flat with a servant, a daughter, and a wife; now he lived in a tiny flat in the old part of town, where almost every night he was joined by his young student mistress. He did not need to squire her through the world from hotel to hotel; he could make love to her in his own flat, in his own bed, with his own books and his ashtray on the bedside table!

She was a modest girl and not particularly pretty, but she admired Franz in the way Franz had only recently admired Sabina. He found it not unpleasant. And if he did perhaps feel that trading Sabina for a student with glasses was something of a comedown, his innate goodness saw to it that he cared for her and lavished on her the paternal love that had never had a true outlet before, given that Marie-Anne had always behaved less like his daughter than like a copy of Marie-Claude.

One day, he paid a visit to his wife. He told her he would like to remarry.

Marie-Claude shook her head.

"But a divorce won't make any difference to you! You won't lose a thing! I'll give you all the property!"

"I don't care about property," she said.

"Then what do you care about?"

"Love," she said with a smile.

"Love?" Franz asked in amazement.

"Love is a battle," said Marie-Claude, still smiling. "And I plan to go on fighting. To the end."

"Love is a battle?" said Franz. "Well, I don't feel at all like fighting." And he left.

10

AFTER four years in Geneva, Sabina settled in Paris, but she could not escape her melancholy. If someone had asked her what had come over her, she would have been hard pressed to find words for it.

When we want to give expression to a dramatic situation in our lives, we tend to use metaphors of heaviness. We say that something has become a great burden to us. We either bear the burden or fail and go down with it; we struggle with it, win or lose. And Sabina—what *had* come over her? Nothing. She had left a man because she felt like leaving him. Had he persecuted her? Had he tried to take revenge on her? No. Her drama was a drama not of heaviness but of lightness. What fell to her lot was not the burden but the unbearable lightness of being.

Until that time, her betrayals had filled her with excitement and joy, because they opened up new paths to new adventures of betrayal. But what if the paths came to an end? One could betray one's parents, husband, country, love, but when parents, husband, country, and love were gone—what was left to betray?

Sabina felt emptiness all around her. What if that emptiness was the goal of all her betrayals?

Naturally, she had not realized it until now. How could she have? The goals we pursue are always veiled. A girl who longs for marriage longs for

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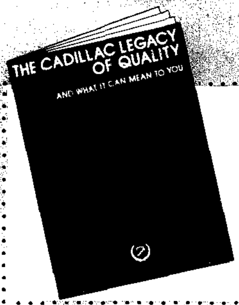

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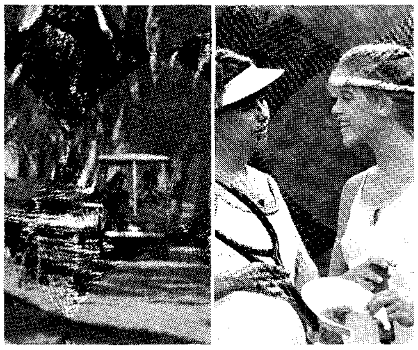

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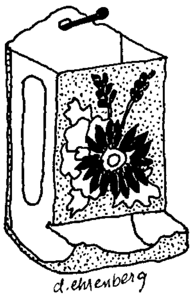
something she knows nothing about. The boy who hankers after fame has no idea what fame is. The thing that gives our every move its meaning is always totally unknown to us. Sabina was unaware of the goal that lay behind her longing to betray. The unbearable lightness of being—was that the goal? Her departure from Geneva brought her considerably closer to it.

Three years after moving to Paris she received a letter from Prague. It was from Tomas's son. Somehow or other he had found out about her and got hold of her address, and now he was writing to her as his father's "closest friend." He informed her of the deaths of Tomas and Tereza. For the past few years they had been living in a village, where Tomas was employed as a driver at a collective farm. From time to time they would drive over to the next town and spend the night in a cheap hotel. The road there wound through some hills, and their pickup had crashed and hurtled down a steep incline. Their bodies had been crushed to a pulp. The police determined later that the brakes were in disastrous condition.

She could not get over the news. The last link to her past had been broken.

According to her old habit, she decided to calm herself by taking a walk in a cemetery. The Montparnasse Cemetery was the closest. It was all tiny houses—miniature chapels over each grave. Sabina could not understand why the dead would want to have imitation palaces built over them. The cemetery was vanity transmogrified into stone. Instead of growing more sensible in death, the inhabitants of the cemetery were sillier than they had been in life. Their monuments were meant to display how important they were. There were no fathers, brothers, sons, or grandmothers buried there—only public figures, the bearers of titles, degrees, and honors; even the postal clerk celebrated his chosen profession, his social significance: his dignity.



Walking along a row of graves, she noticed people gathering for a burial. The funeral director had an armful of flowers and was giving one to each mourner. He handed one to Sabina as well. She joined the group. They made a long detour past many monuments before they came to the grave, free for the moment of its heavy gravestone. She leaned over the hole. It was extremely deep. She dropped in the flower. It sailed down to the coffin in graceful somersaults. In Bohemia the graves were not so deep. In Paris the graves were deeper, just as the buildings were taller. Her eye fell on the stone, which lay next to the grave. It chilled her, and she hurried home.

She thought about that stone all day. Why had it horrified her so?

She answered herself: When graves are covered with stones, the dead can no longer get out.

But the dead can't get out anyway! What difference does it make whether they're covered with soil or stones?

The difference is that if a grave is covered with a stone it means we don't want the deceased to come back. The heavy stone tells the deceased, "Stay where you are!"

That made Sabina think about her father's grave. There was soil above his grave, with flowers growing out of it and a maple tree reaching down to it, and the roots and flowers offered his corpse a path out of the grave. If her father had been covered with a stone, she would never have been able to communicate with him after he died, and hear his voice in the trees pardoning her.

What was it like in the cemetery where Tereza and Tomas were buried?

Once more she started thinking about them. From time to time they would drive over to the next town and spend the night in a cheap hotel. That passage in the letter had caught her eye. It meant they were happy. And again she pictured Tomas as if he were one of her paintings: Don Juan in the foreground, a specious stage set by a naïve designer, and through a crack in the set—Tristan. He died as Tristan, not as Don Juan. Sabina's parents had died in the same week, Tomas and Tereza in the same second. Suddenly she missed Franz terribly.

When she told Franz about her cemetery walks he gave a shiver of disgust and called cemeteries dumps of stones and bones. A gulf of misunderstanding had immediately opened between them. Not until that day at the Montparnasse Cemetery did she see what he meant. She was sorry to have been so impatient with him. Perhaps if they had stayed together longer Sabina and Franz would have begun to understand the words they used. Gradually, timorously, their vocabularies would have come together, like bashful lovers, and the music of one would have begun to intersect with the music of the other. But it was too late now.

Yes, it was too late, and Sabina knew she would leave Paris, move on, and on again, because were she to die here they would cover her up with a stone, and in the mind of a woman for whom no place is home the thought of an end to all flight is unbearable.

II

ALL Franz's friends knew about Marie-Claude; they all knew about the girl with the oversized glasses. But no one knew about Sabina. Franz was wrong when he thought his wife had told her friends about her. Sabina was a beautiful woman, and Marie-Claude did not want people going about comparing their faces.

Because Franz was so afraid of being found out, he had never asked for any of Sabina's paintings or drawings or even a snapshot of her. As a result, she disappeared from his life without a trace. There was not a scrap of tangible evidence to show that he had spent the most wonderful year of his life with her.

Which only increased his desire to remain faithful to her.

Sometimes when they were alone in his flat together, the girl would lift her eyes from a book, throw him an inquiring glance, and say, "What are you thinking about?"

Sitting in his armchair, staring up at the ceiling, Franz always found some plausible response, but in fact he was thinking of Sabina.

Whenever he published an article in a scholarly journal, the girl was the first to read it and discuss it with him. But all he could think of was what Sabina would have said about it. Everything he did he did for Sabina, the way Sabina would have liked to see it done.

It was a perfectly innocent form of infidelity and one eminently suited to Franz, who would never have done his bespectacled student mistress any harm. He nourished the cult of Sabina more as religion than as love.

Indeed, according to the theology of that religion it was Sabina who had sent him the girl. Between his earthly love and his unearthly love, therefore, there was perfect peace. And if love sublime must (for theological reasons) contain a strong dose of the inexplica-

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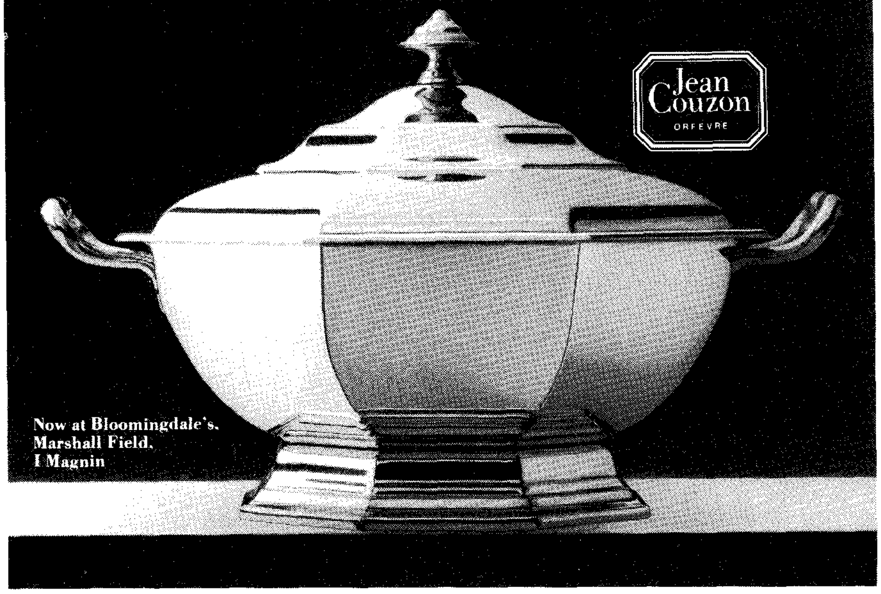

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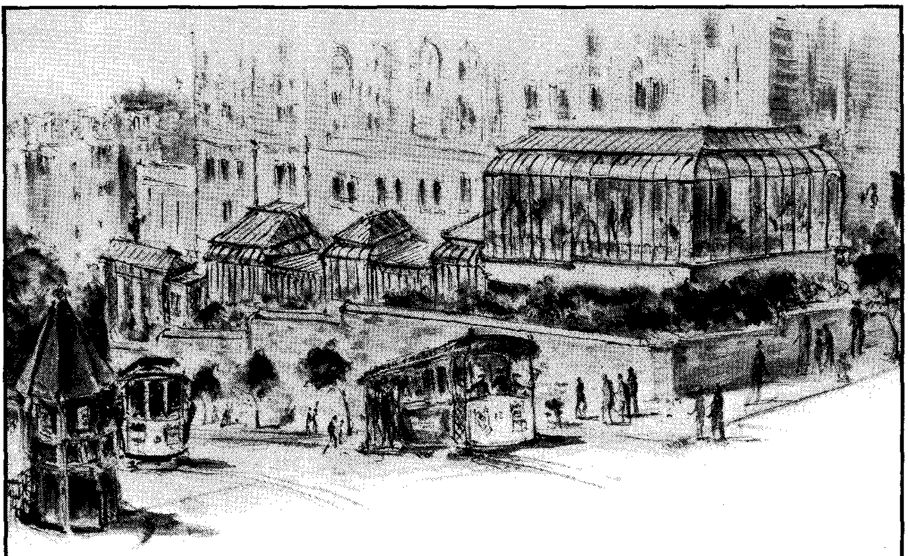

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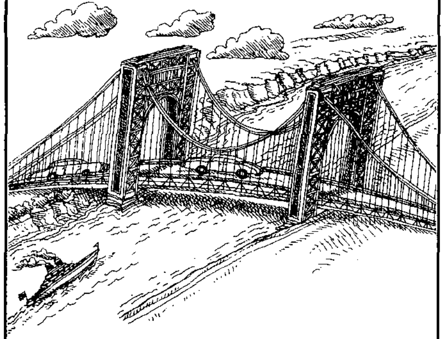

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ble and incomprehensible (we have only to recall all the misunderstood words and the long lexicon of misunderstandings!), his earthly love rested on true understanding.

The student mistress was much younger than Sabina, and the musical composition of her life had scarcely been outlined; she was grateful to Franz for the motifs he gave her. Franz's Grand March was now her creed as well. Music was now her Dionysian intoxication. They often went dancing together. They lived in truth, and nothing they did was secret. They sought out the company of friends, colleagues, students, and strangers, and enjoyed sitting, drinking, and chatting with them. They took frequent excursions to the Alps. Franz would bend over, the girl would hop onto his back, and off he would run through the meadows, declaiming at the top of his voice a long German poem his mother had taught him as a child. The girl laughed with glee, admiring his legs, shoulders, and lungs as she clasped his neck.

The only thing she could not quite fathom was the curious sympathy he had for the countries occupied by the Russian empire. On the anniversary of the invasion, they attended a memorial meeting organized by a Czech group in Geneva. The room was nearly empty. The speaker had artificially waved gray hair. He read a long speech that bored even the few enthusiasts who had come to hear it. His French was grammatically correct but heavily accented. From time to time, to stress a point, he would raise his index finger, as if threatening the audience.

The girl with the glasses could barely suppress her yawns, while Franz smiled blissfully at her side. The longer he looked at the pleasing gray-haired man with the admirable index finger, the more he saw him as a secret messenger, an angelic intermediary between him and his goddess. He closed his eyes and dreamed. He closed his eyes as he had closed them over Sabina's body in fifteen European hotels and one in America.

—MILAN KUNDERA

(Translated, from the Czech, by Michael Henry Heim.)

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[*From the Washington Post*]

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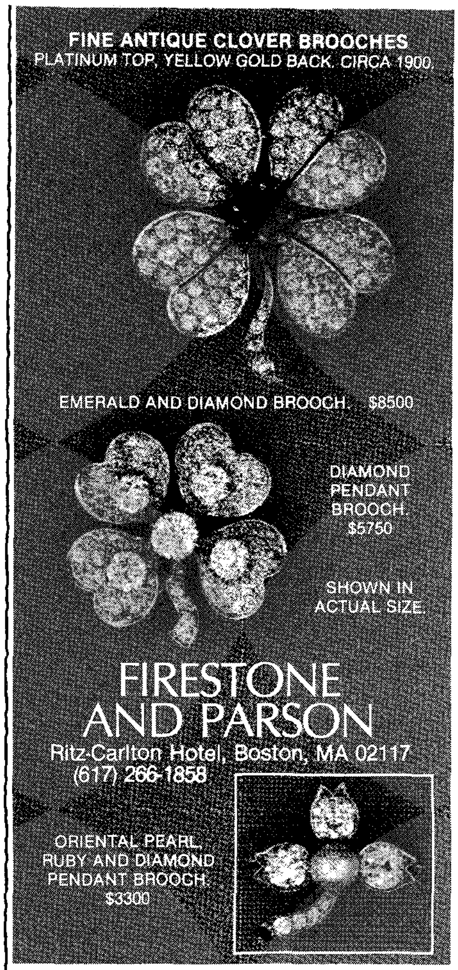

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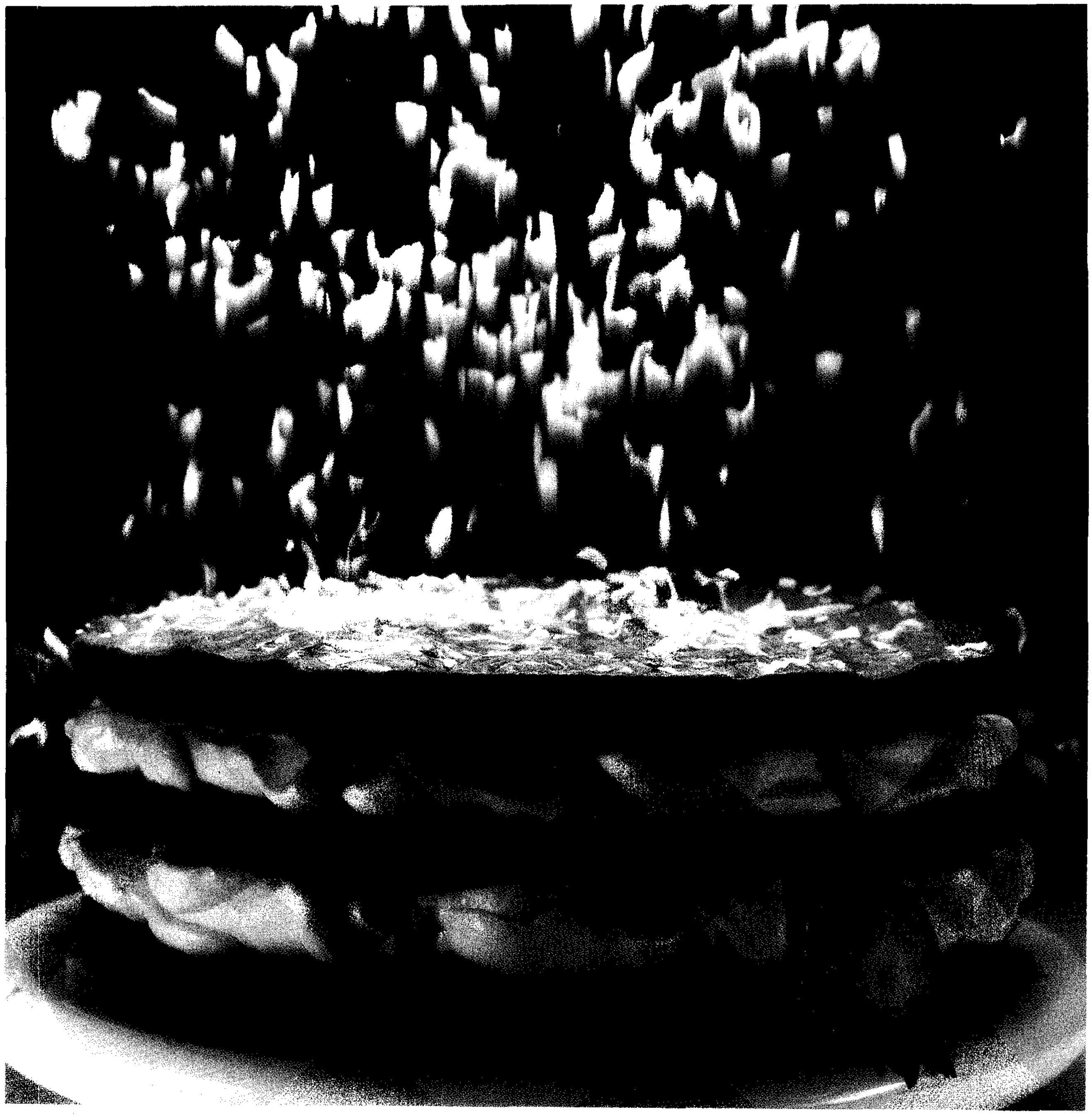

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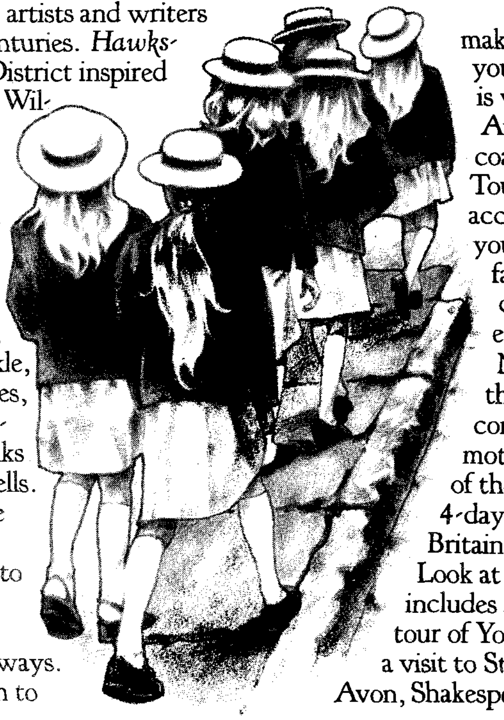

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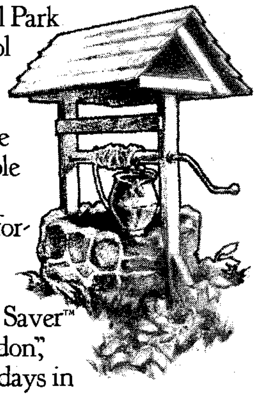

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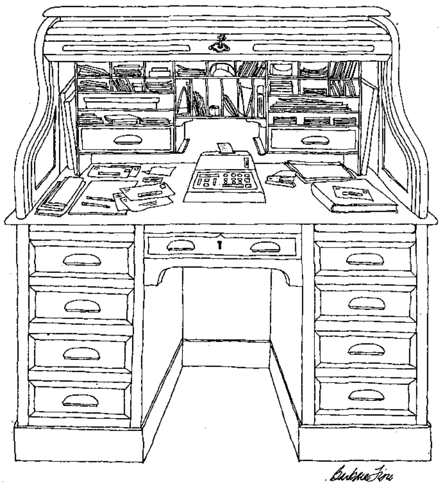
THE SPORTING SCENE

A GRANDIOSE MANIFESTATION

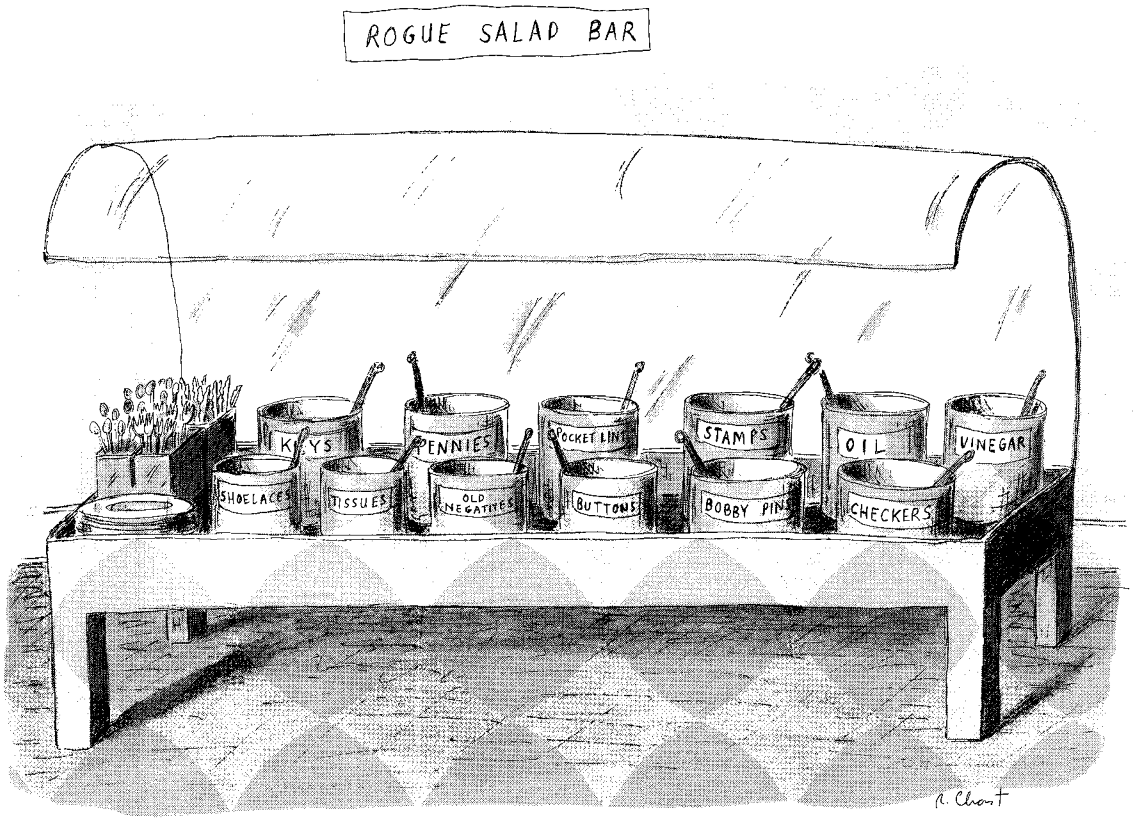
NEARLY everybody over ninety remembers Sarajevo as the spot where the Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was shot, in 1914, by the Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip. I, somewhat younger, have long remembered the place because, when I was an unassailably amateur philatelist many years ago, the pages I always turned to most fondly in my 1901-20 album were those devoted to an otherwise unknown territory with the beguiling name of Bosnia-Herzegovina, of which Sarajevo, then as now, was the capital city. Sarajevo's population on the eve of the First World War, according to my album, was fifty-one thousand nine hundred and nineteen. Today, it is nearly ten times that. Its population has fluctuated during this century. The First World War theoretically began with young Princip's bullet. (Because he got rid of the Hapsburgs, his footprints, like those of a Hollywood star, have been reproduced on the sidewalk where he stood and took aim, alongside a bridge—spanning the Miljačka River, which flows through town—that has been named after him. His feet were small—exactly my size.) The Second World War hit Sarajevo hard. It was on the bitterly cold mountainsides around the city—Jahorina, Bjelašnica, Igman, names by now so familiar to all those who, like me, watched the recent Olympics in situ, not to mention the hundreds of millions who had a probably much better view on television—that Tito and his partisans fought the Nazis early in 1942. "Mount Jahorina is so large," one Yugoslavian folk song goes, that "gray falcon cannot cross it, let alone a steed bearing a hero." The Sarajlije, as Sarajevo's inhabitants are called, paid grievously for the partisans' resistance. Some ten thousand of them—one-tenth of the population at the time—did not survive the German occupation. The renascent city seemed all but oblivious of that grim history when I arrived in the Socialist Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina one evening to gird up for the Fourteenth Winter Olympics. I sensed early the next morning that everything was going to be all right—or as all right as anything can be in the turmoil inescapably characteristic of any quadrennial Olympic gathering—when one indigene, a man not visibly in much better shape than I was, though taller, rose from his seat on a bus and insisted that I take it. (Sarajlije run to height. I had to stand on tiptoe to get to eye level with the peephole on the door to my apartment, in the press village—an austere but immaculately tended accommodation that, after the departure of the assembled journalists, who outnumbered athletes by nearly three to one, was destined to be converted into housing for the laity.) Three days later, I stopped by a post office to buy some stamps—three stamps to a postcard. As I set about licking a bunch of them, the woman in charge offered to take over for me. Then she smiled and thanked me for my patronage. I had rarely felt so far removed from New York. But wait! Leaving the post office in a giddy daze, I was pursued and accosted by a young woman who said in understandable English—my Serbo-Croatian is pretty much confined to *Hvala* (Thank you) and *Nema problema* (No problem)—"Please, I found this. Is it yours?" Whereupon she handed me three thousand dinars—about twenty-five dollars—that she evidently thought I'd dropped. I didn't think I had, but before I could deny ownership the samaritan had glided away. It would never happen at Madison Square Garden. A striking difference between the Sarajevo of the Olympics and other cities of my acquaintance was epitomized by the legend on one of the many pins that were being swapped by souvenir hunters. It had the familiar red heart on it, but the accompanying words were not "I ♥ Sarajevo." They were "Sarajevo ♥ You."

The good will showered on visitors by the home folks seemed at times nearly as abundant as the snow, which not only did away with the worries of the Games' organizers, *avant le déluge*, that there might not be enough of the crucial stuff (Sarajevo is normally just about the southernmost area in Europe where skiing is possible) but fell so heavily for a few days that the downhill events on the precisely scheduled agenda had to be rescheduled several times over. One Czechoslovakian skiing coach was heard to exclaim, arms extended skyward, "Siberia finally comes to the Olympics!" The head of security for the Games said at one point, "Every citizen of Yugoslavia is involved in insuring the security of this grandiose manifestation." That seemed to apply to snow removal as well. All day and all night, armies of young men and young women, some of them Yugoslav Army cadets, fought the snow; after one particularly harrowing skirmish, they were rewarded—a socialist regime can act in ways that might elsewhere be unacceptable—with a chocolate bar apiece. There were so many plows churning around downtown Sarajevo, carefully skirting the snowmen that stood like sentinels at several intersections, that one wondered if there could be any equipment left in Belgrade or Zagreb. Two of the snowmen I encountered had been fashioned in the image of the Games' official mascot, Vučko the wolf, which was chosen after a spirited competition with a chamois, a weasel, a lamb, a hedgehog, and a snowball. One sculptured Vučko was perched on a bobsled; in an authentic Siberia, one supposed, the wolf would have been depicted running behind a sleigh, and gaining. But then a Vučko isn't a full-fledged wolf. A wolf would be a Vuk. "Vučko" is an affectionate diminutive—a "wolfie."



THE death of Yuri Andropov and the anguish in Beirut were, of course, the most consequential events that occurred during the twelve days of the Fourteenth Winter Olympics; but in Sarajevo the transcendent topics of conversation among many of the Americans on the bustling scene were the state of Cindy Nelson's knee, the state of Kitty Carruthers' ankle, and whether or not the youthful United States hockey team could somehow repeat its implausible victory over the

Soviet Union and its ultimate capture of one of the twelve gold medals that Americans bagged at Lake Placid in 1980's exceptionally lucky Thirteenth. (There was at least one attempt to generate some news with farther-reaching implications. The mayor of Los Angeles, where the Summer Games will be held in July and August, jointly issued a proclamation with his Sarajevo counterpart calling upon all nations to observe—as the ancient Greeks purportedly did—a truce while the Olympics were in progress. Lebanon was among the forty-nine countries represented at Sarajevo.) People's horizons do tend to shrink at these contests. It is said that when one American hockey official was asked if he thought Andropov's demise would adversely affect the performance of the Soviet team (it didn't) he replied, "Only if he's a goalie or defense man."



For a while, there was speculation whether on February 14th, the day of Andropov's funeral, the Games would be cancelled. It is the Yugoslavian practice to forgo all entertainment on such solemn occasions, but, everybody was relieved to learn, sports are exempt. That the program of that day could go on as planned proved to be a break for the host country. Yugoslavia has been part of the Olympic fraternity since 1920, but never, never—not in winter, not in summer—had any of its athletes won a medal of any kind. And this year, up to Valentine's Day—which is not widely observed, if at all, in Bosnia-Herzegovina—the home-country participants had hardly distinguished themselves, their best placings, for instance, having been a thirty-first out of thirty-two entrants in the women's fifteen-hundred-metre speed skating (even that set a new national record), a thirty-eighth in the men's thirty-kilometre cross-country, a twenty-second in the two-man bobsled, a seventeenth in the women's luge and an eleventh in the men's, and a forty-first in the men's thousand-kilometre speed skating. After Yugoslavia had succumbed to the awesome Russians in ice hockey by a 9–1 score, the losing coach said, "I expected a more serious defeat." (He got it, 11–0, from the Swedish team, which was nowhere in the Russians' class.) But the day of mourning for Andropov—with the Yugoslav flag, like all the flags throughout the Olympic community, at half-staff—ended up for the locals as a day of unabashed celebration. They received a very special Valentine gift when their twenty-one-year-old Jure Franko, the son of a ski jumper, finished second in the men's giant slalom, only twenty-three hundredths of a second behind the gold medallist, Max Julen, of Switzerland. (I say "only," but actually in skiing twenty-three hundredths of a second represents a not inconsiderable stretch of time. There have been races in which four entrants finished within a span of three hundredths of a second; Cindy Nelson—whose ailing knee kept her from having any chance of stepping onto an awards platform—is reputed to be able to *think* in terms of hundredths of a second. To a topflight skier, a whole second is an aeon.) Anyway, young Franko's near-superlative feat triggered a frenzy of exaltation such as hadn't been seen in Sarajevo for minutes, days, weeks, months, or, I suspect, quite a few years. A huge crowd assembled to watch him receive his precedent-setting silver, and to bellow "Yu-go-sla-vi-a!" and, according to a bilingual native alongside me, "We belong to Tito! Tito is ours!" It is the Yugoslavian custom not to name streets after living people. The only exception so far has been Marshal Tito, whose honored name has long graced one of Sarajevo's main thoroughfares. If sometime in this memorable year it should be proposed to name a street after Jure Franko (who observed modestly that what his accomplishment might mean for Yugoslavia "is for others to say"), no one would be surprised. At dusk on the evening of the fifteenth, at the summit of the building in Kafana Park that rises high above Marshal Tito Street, and where the time and the temperature are displayed in electric lights, a new illumination was flashed at passersby: "BRAVO JURE."

Franko was asked soon after he became an immediate national hero how he thought he might have fared if Ingemar Stenmark, of Sweden, had been in the field against him. His answer was appropriately noncommittal. Stenmark, who won both the giant slalom and the slalom at Lake Placid, had been declared ineligible for the Olympics this time, because he had elected not to put into a Swedish trust fund the money he received for skiing

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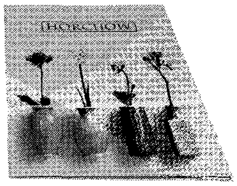

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but instead to handle it himself. Furthermore, to avoid Swedish taxes on his lucrative earnings from his sport he had set up residence in Monte Carlo, which some individuals even less wealthy than World Cup-class skiers use as a tax haven. Stenmark turned up at Sarajevo anyway, and one Yugoslav member of the organizing committee for the Games announced, not altogether comprehensibly, that "his attendance will make the Games more significant." Certainly, the Swedish star got much more attention than, for instance, the octogenarian King of Norway, who used to be a ski jumper and, when he was Crown Prince, an Olympic yachtsman; but then King Olav could scarcely have expected to be eulogized, for he wasn't sponsored by any ski manufacturer. Stenmark was—by Elan, a Yugoslav company. At a press conference arranged by Elan, Stenmark said that he would have liked to race at Sarajevo, but that the International Olympic Committee had "made a decision and I have to accept it." It was his own decision, of course, to dispose of his earnings as he saw fit. His sponsors seemed confused about just what sort of teams other skiers belonged to, or should belong to. One Elan man said, "I am confident that all the competitors of the Elan team"—some of us hadn't known till then that any such entity existed—"will record noteworthy results." Jure Franko slid to victory on Elan skis. Franko gave no indication, however, that he believed he belonged to any team other than the one behind whose flag he had marched in the Opening Ceremony.

FEW of the events attracted capacity crowds, perhaps because they were so extensively televised, perhaps because so much of the rest of Europe was also buried under snow, perhaps because the ticket prices were by Yugoslavian standards astronomical. In that intransigently socialist, though no less intransigently politically unaligned, country, it costs two dinars—a little less than two cents—to make a local phone call, and once you're connected you can talk as long as you like. The better seats at the ice-dancing final—won going away by the dazzling British terpsichores Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean, performing their now famous interpretation of Ravel's "Boléro"—cost five thousand two hundred and fifty dinars. (Socialism notwithstanding, the most visible emissary of capitalism at the

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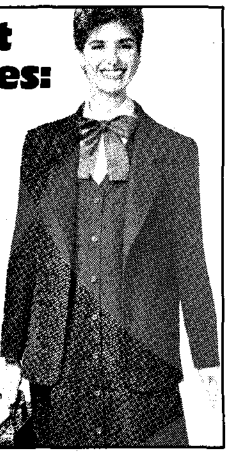

Games, next to the Coca-Cola Company, which has been hanging around the Olympics since 1928 and which welcomed us all fifty-six years later with the pious asseveration that "long-term associations of this kind cannot be measured in dollars and cents," was Merrill Lynch; it had its name and a likeness of its nimble-footed bull imprinted on the back of every admission ticket. Mitsubishi was the Official Car—I lived on Mitsubishi Avenue, a street whose name I suspected would soon be changed—and another Japanese concern, Mizuno, was the Official Supplier of Balls to the Winter Olympics, though there are no Winter Games sports that employ balls.)

The Opening Ceremony was, as it usually is, a cracking good show, with a packed house. Its only flaw may have been that while at one time or another there were hundreds of musicians in the Kosevo Stadium, going through the motions of manipulating their instruments, most of the music was canned. The selection of the American who would carry the Stars and Stripes in the international parade of nearly sixteen hundred athletes was noteworthy. The athletes affiliated with each discipline—bobsledding, ski jumping, speed skating, et al.—put up a candidate. There were eight contenders for the honor, the same number that the Democratic Party concurrently had beating the bushes in Iowa. Then, after what I was told were some eloquent electioneering speeches, the whole hundred-and-twenty-four-member squad voted. The winner, Frank Masley, was the representative of a fairly minor sport, the luge, in which he eventually finished a respectable fourteenth. All things considered, however, Sarajevo's man of the luge hour had to be a thirty-six-year-old from upstate New York named George Tucker, who didn't have to win an election to carry a flag. He was the entire Puerto Rican team. (He was born in Puerto Rico but doesn't speak much Spanish.) Out on the luge chute, Tucker proved to be a model of valiant consistency: in four runs, he finished last or next to last every time. I ran into him as he was getting dressed for the Closing Ceremony, where he would once more strut his solitary stuff; he had an imposing "Chef de Mission" band around one arm. Jure Franko had received about five hundred telegrams from idolaters all over Yugoslavia within twenty-four hours of his coup d'état. (It was too much to

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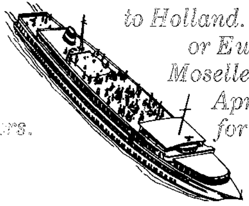

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hope that he could score again, in the slalom, and he didn't; he took a tumble, and that was that.) Tucker, one week after the luge competition was over, hadn't had any messages from Puerto Rico at all. He was not fazed, and said he was thinking seriously of trying again in the 1988 Games. "You're supposed to get better with experience," he told me. "The trouble is, I haven't had much experience."

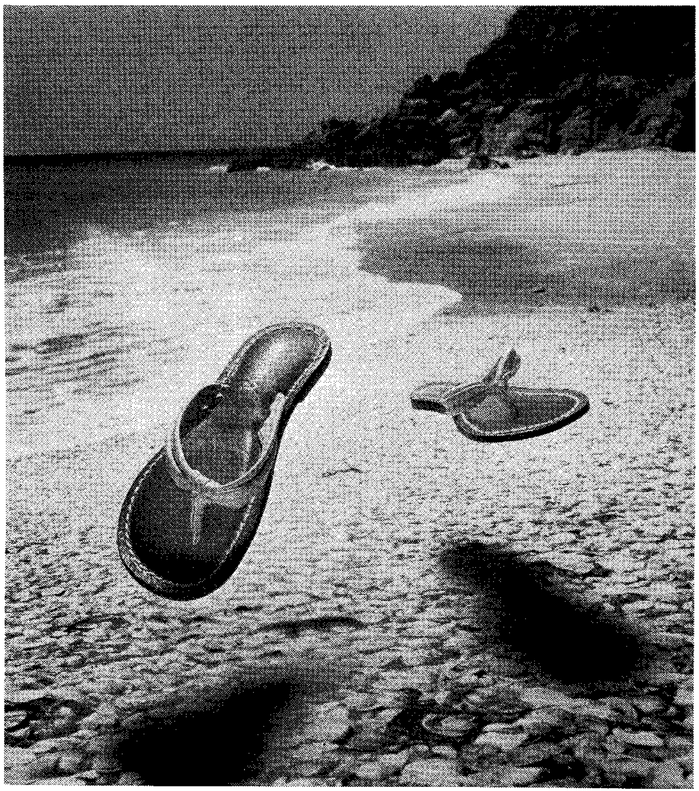
Another thing that Tucker had going for him was his unchallengeable amateurism. William E. Simon, president of the United States Olympic Committee, who used to be the Secretary of the Treasury and knows a good deal about money, spoke up sharply at Sarajevo on the matter of athletes, especially skiers, who received lucrative rewards for exhibiting their well-waxed skills elsewhere and then turned up at the Olympics ostensibly—it was not his word—simon-pure. His word was "cheating." Amateurism has become a farce, no matter how straightfacedly East Germany—which, like the Soviet Union, has most of its athletes on a year-round payroll—may proclaim that all its participants are "implementing the Olympic ideal precisely." However the East German system works, it produces formidable results: a whopping twenty-four medals (the Soviet Union garnered twenty-five and the United States a skimpy eight), among them two golds and two silvers for the speed skater Karin Enke, whose strong, long legs ought to be duplicated and enshrined in Sarajevo's new Olympic Museum.

Juan Antonio Samaranch, the president of the International Olympic Committee, told an inquiring Yugoslav reporter, without mentioning by name East Germany or any other nation, that "in the end, the sports organizations of the socialist countries have nothing in common with those of the capitalist." While the I.O.C. has rules covering just about every imaginable contingency (skiers, for instance, may display manufacturers' names on their boots and skis but not—so far, at least—on their clothing), it has not yet arrived at any clearcut definition of an amateur, or, for that matter, a professional. There was a good deal of acrimony at Sarajevo about which ice-hockey players were acceptable and which weren't; it was finally decided that one was a professional only if one had signed a contract with and played for a team in the National Hockey League. Other pro leagues, and other commitments, didn't count. Nobody I ran into thought to dwell on the irony that when Lord Stanley, the governor-general of Canada in 1893, first put up the cup that has since become the N.H.L.'s equivalent of a gold medal, he stipulated that it was to go to the best *amateur* Canadian team in that icy dominion. There appears to be slim hope that the matter of money can ever be separated from many Olympic sports. (Will the day come when figure skaters start carving onto the ice the names of their costume designers?). After all, Kallipsos was accused of winning the pentathlon in 332 B.C. by bribing his opponents.

The president of the International Ice Hockey Federation said on the eve of Sarajevo that his sport would assuredly be the pièce de résistance there, and he added that "the Winter Games without ice hockey would be like soup made without salt." To many Americans at Sarajevo, their 1984 ice-hockey deputation was, at least until it went out on the rink, the salt of the earth. The memory of the 1980 team's gold medal, following its "miracle" victory over Russia, haunted everybody. A couple of days before the Americans' first 1984 game, against Canada, John Harrington, one of two holdovers from Lake Placid, was asked at the Olympic Village what he recalled about the Soviet team's reaction to defeat four years ago. "I looked down the ice toward the Russians," Harrington said, "and I saw sadness and also a smirk, as if they could understand what was happening to us." The Americans, on being eliminated even before they could get to the final round at Sarajevo (the Russians, who got the gold this time and could probably win the Stanley Cup, too, were in another preliminary group and so the two teams never met), were observed in various postures of understandable dejection. There was no visible smirking. It was as if, after all the hullabaloo they had inspired, they couldn't comprehend that they, like very many other competitors who had worked very hard and travelled very far, were simply also-rans. Well, there are consolations: five of them had already been drafted by the N.H.L. Toward the end of the Games, their head coach, Lou Vairo, who had earlier been practically stampeded by journalists whenever they spotted him, looked up at a sparsely attended press conference and asked plaintively, "Where is everybody today?"

By then, many of the American spectators, whose partisanship was so vigorously expressed that they acquired the nickname "the rowdies," had switched their allegiance from ice hockey to figure skating, where their incantations were much more satisfactorily rewarded. Scott Hamilton, as had been widely predicted, gave them a gold in the men's figure skating, despite what was for him a lacklustre performance. In the women's, Rosalynn Sumners gave them a silver, and they got another silver from the Carrutherses, Kitty (her shoe tightly laced) and her brother Peter, in the pairs. The two grew up in Burlington, Massachusetts, which is also the home of the Fusco brothers, Mark and Scott, of the ill-fated hockey team. Both Burlington families, while their offspring were growing up, had built rinks there to help them polish their skills, but apparently neither family was aware of the other's ice before Sarajevo. (The Fuscos' coach at Harvard, Bill Cleary, was one of two Cleary brothers on the United States gold-medal ice-hockey team of 1960.) Close relatives are not rare in the Olympics. Sweden had twin brothers on its hockey teams in 1952, 1956, and 1972. But surely a record of sorts was set when those old pros the Mahre twins, Phil and Steve, made the last day of the Games a bright one for the rowdies by coming in first and second in the slalom.

It was in skiing—a sport in which the distinction between amateur and professional is lost in a fog as thick as the one that several times blanketed the Sarajevo hills—that the United States had gained two other golds, courtesy of Debbie Armstrong in the women's giant slalom (her margin of triumph was a hefty forty hundredths of a second, Phil Mahre's a slimmer twenty-one hundredths) and of Bill Johnson in the men's downhill (with a margin of twenty-seven hundredths of a second). Miss Armstrong is twenty, and this was her first major victory anywhere. "I was never anything special when I was younger," she said afterward, engagingly. "I used to come in third when the person who should have come in third fell down or something." Ingemar Stenmark said at Sarajevo, from his detached vantage point, "An Olympic



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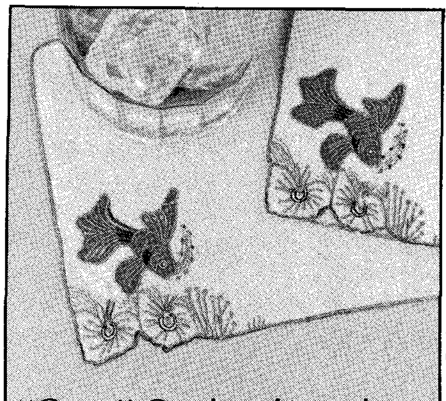

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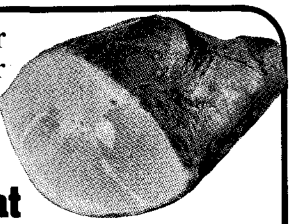

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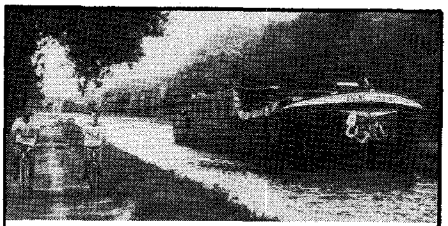
gold medal is worth very much." After Miss Armstrong collected hers, she never once alluded, in my hearing, to how much it might be worth to her. Bill Johnson, who, at twenty-three, should be, of course, much more mature than she is, brought everything back into perspective when he was asked, after his relatively easy victory, if he had ever held a job. Yes, for six months, as a dishwasher. How did he manage to live? "Contributions." Would he let people capitalize on his medal? "As long as I can, too."

THE very first American flags to be run up on a medallist's pole were hoisted, oddly, not to honor any of the athletes in the United States contingent but for a couple of resolute skiers, Bill Latimer and David Jamison, who competed in an offshoot of the formal events—four slalom races for amputees, conducted on a day when, as it happened, the regular skiing program had had to be cancelled because of nasty weather. The International Federation of Sports for the Disabled had proposed such an event to Mr. Samaranch, and the I.O.C. president had not only embraced it but also arranged to underwrite the transportation and housing for twenty-nine crippled athletes from ten countries. What brand of skis Latimer and Jamison favored was not, for a welcome change, exultingly trumpeted by them or Elan or anybody else. Samaranch next plans a wheelchair race at Los Angeles. He expects to be doing a lot of travelling before then; he pledged on taking office, in 1980, that he would undertake to visit every place on earth that had a National Olympic Committee. There were a hundred and fifty-five countries on the list then. He has now been to a hundred and fifteen of them, and hopes to complete his arduous mission by midsummer. It won't be made any easier by the circumstance that at Sarajevo four more nations, none of them notably accessible, were admitted into his expanding sphere—Bhutan, Rwanda, the Solomon Islands, and Western Samoa.

Samaranch, a skier himself, and also a golfer, a boxer, an equestrian, a yachtsman, and a footballer, has somehow found time, unlike me, to maintain an interest in philately. He should be able, as he traverses the world, to acquire a fine new batch of stamps. At home, in Spain, he was an industrialist, and for a time he was a diplomat—Spanish Ambassador to the Soviet



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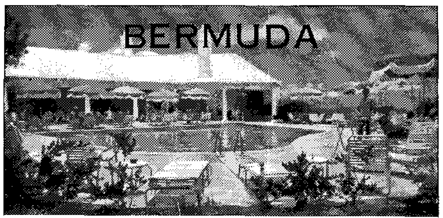

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Union and to Outer Mongolia. He can be very diplomatic. When he was asked at Sarajevo if he was happy about the peculiar decisions reached with respect to the eligibility of ice-hockey players, he replied, "Yes and no." Another time, speaking of the work of the I.O.C., he said, "We are at the end of our session, but the session is not finished." He himself also collects medals. He has been invested over his sixty-three busy years with, *inter* many *alia*, Spain's Gran Cruz de Isabel la Católica and Gran Cruz de Alfonso X el Sabio, Argentina's Order of May, and the Ivory Coast's Cravate de Commandeur de l'Ordre National. At Sarajevo, he picked up an Order of Yugoslav Flag, with Sash. Samaranch is quite different from his two immediate Olympic predecessors. The American Avery Brundage, who ruled the roost from 1952 to 1972, was tall, autocratic, princely, almost papal. The Irish Lord Killanin, who held sway between 1972 and 1980, was paunchy, relaxed, jovial, avuncular. Samaranch is diligent, efficient, patient, and physically unobtrusive. He could be cast as the head butler of a stately home of England, the kind of person to whom you could entrust your hat and coat and be confident they'd be brushed before you left. At Sarajevo, Samaranch was—athletes and visiting royalty aside—a celebrity of the first order. (There were some beguiling transliterations of his name from the Cyrillic—"Huana Antonia Samarana," for example. At that, he fared better than the Reverend J. Bernard Fell, one of the chieftains of the Lake Placid Games; he became "Mr. Fell Rewewrnd.") Mr. Samaranch's patience was never more heavily taxed or his tact more called upon than when a couple of ABC television reporters, with the Games well under way and the I.O.C. president as instantly recognizable and identifiable as Rodney Dangerfield, pounced upon him one afternoon when he was in a hurry to get somewhere, to elicit his views on some throbbing question of the moment. When the interview was over, one of his inquisitors said, to the wonder of all within earshot, "Could you spell your name so we're sure we have it right?" The seasoned diplomat permitted himself the flicker of a smile. "My name is Samaranch," he responded. "S-a-m-a-r-a-n-c-h."

Rosalynn Sumners, who cut as pretty a picture as you could ask for when she won her silver, said beforehand that while she aspired to prove

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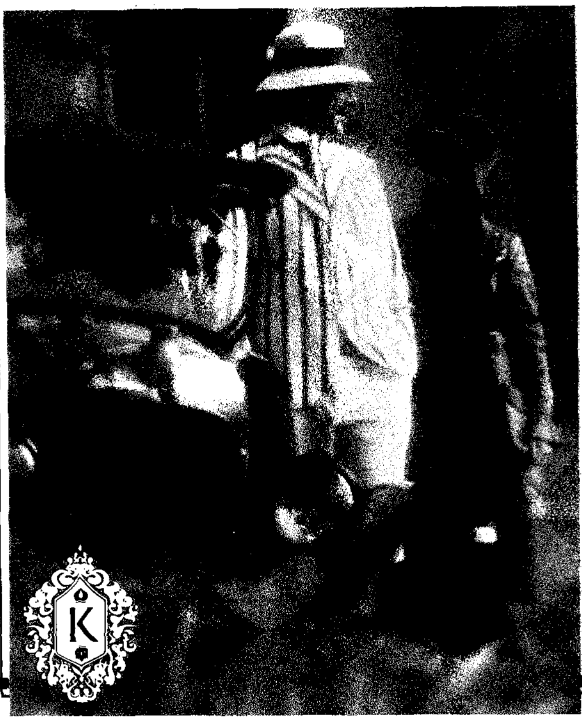

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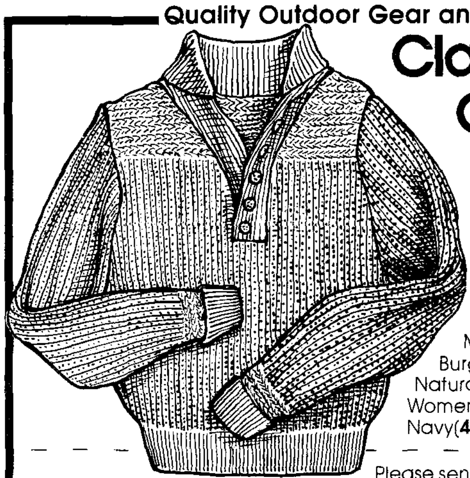

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Catherine, determined to take the best of Italian liqueurs and food with her to her new country, demanded the recipe. The monks, understandably reluctant to give up the source of much pride and considerable income, were also understandably fearful of what a refusal could mean. The de' Medici penchant for assassination was hardly a secret. Catherine got her recipe.

Or did she? True, she got a recipe which she took with her to France and France today has many splendid liqueurs. But no Sambuca. Sambuca Romana is still made in a beautiful section of Rome from the berries of the elderbush. And that's the only place in the world it is made.

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she was an athlete by executing the usual jumps and spins she also hoped to prove she was a lady. "I want to bring grace and beauty back to figure skating," she said. "I like to present the fact that I'm feminine." (She did not, of course, expect to get by on feminine graces alone; she had in her entourage a clinical psychologist whose specialty is stress.) I noted with interest while she was gracefully pirouetting that although females were referred to as "women" at other Olympic venues, at the skating rink they were boldly designated "ladies." Figure skating and ice hockey became part of the Olympics at the Summer Games in London in 1908, but the Winter Olympics did not get under way until 1924, at Chamonix, France. (Sonja Henie, then eleven, finished last in the figure skating there.) Actually, France organized Chamonix on its own, and without the concurrence of the then nowhere near as rigid I.O.C., which did not wish to offend the Scandinavian countries; they had insisted that competitions requiring snow and ice could logically be held nowhere on earth but in their region. Later in 1924, the I.O.C. did something it probably wouldn't dream of attempting today; it declared, retroactively, that the events at Chamonix had, after all, constituted an official Olympics. These ever-larger undertakings—Sarajevo broke all records for both countries and competitors—now have to be planned way in advance. Calgary is hard at work right now for the 1988 Winter Games, and Sarajevo was visited by dozens of importunate advance men vying to get the 1992 proceedings awarded to their bailiwicks—Germany's Berchtesgaden, Bulgaria's Sofia, France's Albertville, Norway's Lillehammer, Sweden's Falun, and Italy's Cortina d'Ampezzo. One of them is likely to be inundated eight years hence. (By that time, blind skiers, if their own importunities are heeded, will have been added to the Olympic community. They ski behind sighted guides, who give them split-second warnings about turns and bumps.) The fateful verdict will be handed down by the I.O.C. sometime in 1986. I have a hunch that whichever of the contenders has the least population will stand a good chance of winning out, because smallness is what appeals to Madame.

MADAME, as everyone who has been around the Olympic movement for more than a brief spell is well

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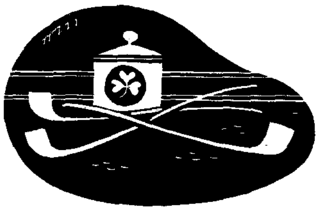
aware, is Monique Berlioux, the full-time executive director of the I.O.C., and she may well be—not even Samaranch excepted—the sports world's most powerful personage. She thought that Lake Placid (pop. 2,500) was an estimable location for a Winter Olympics. Of course, she had better transport there than many of us enjoyed as we tried to hitch rides from our quarters in outlying Wilmington to any of our various destinations. It would doubtless astonish her to know that—as at reunions of veterans of the Second World War there are exchanges of horror stories about Buna or Bastogne—when survivors of the 1980 Games forgather there spill from many a lip chilling recollections of the Battle of Lake Placid. (My own scribbled notes from 1980 contain the feverish words "Fifty years from now, whenever free men meet, they will remember the phrase 'There will never be a bus in Wilmington.' ")

I wangled an audience with Mme. Berlioux in her chambers at the Holiday Inn, a garish-yellow hostel in the newer section of Sarajevo, where most of the V.I.P.s camped out. Security was so tight there—though it wasn't especially oppressive anywhere else—that not even an expected guest could get to her door without an escort. Madame is a commanding figure—five feet seven inches tall, full-bodied, a Gallic Valkyrie. Journalists who have seen her only from a distance sometimes speculate that she is made of steel. She is fifty-eight and grew up in Paris, where her mother was a high-school swimming coach. Monique began swimming competitively at twelve, concentrating on the backstroke, and eventually she won forty titles. She would have been on the French Olympic team in 1948—the year after she got an M.A. from the Sorbonne—but she was foiled by appendicitis. She made the team for the 1952 Games, at Helsinki. Food was still in somewhat short supply in postwar Paris, so the French swimming federation tried to beef up its entrants by passing out jams and jellies. Monique, then twenty-six, was not on the roster of recipients. "They thought I was too old, probably," she told me, with a shrug. She has a magnificent shrug. That rebuff made her so furious that she refused to go to Finland. Two weeks after those Games, in the French national championships, she outswam everyone in sight. Having had her revenge, she gave up competitive swimming.

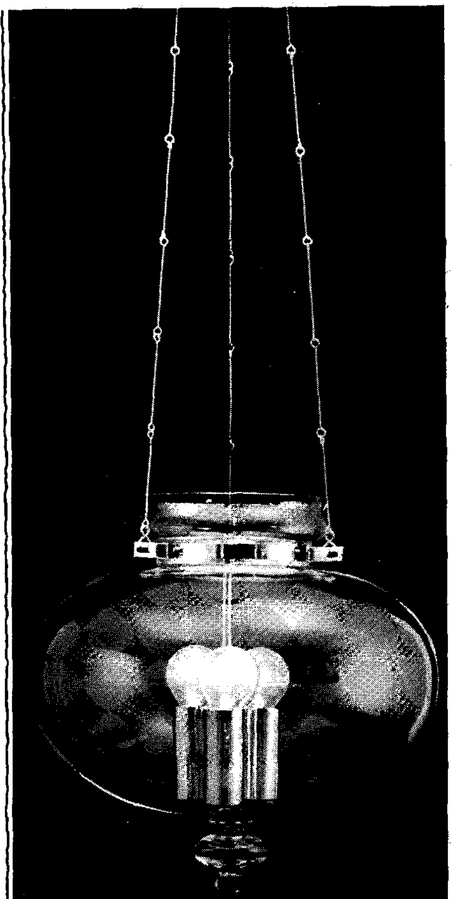


I asked Madame if she'd ever been paid anything for swimming.

"It would have helped sometimes," she said. "There wasn't always enough money on hand to buy a swimsuit." In any event, she added, she would have bridled at the notion of donning a costume with some manufacturer's name inscribed on it. She has often deplored the assault of professionalism upon the Olympics, but she has also softened her criticism by pointing out that young athletes are "malleable, poorly informed, easily credulous, confiding."

Mme. Berlioux took up journalism as a career, writing mainly about sports but also visiting the southern Algerian desert to report on French oil explorations down there. By the nineteen-sixties, she was working for the French Ministry for Youth and Sport. On the side, she wrote two books about the Olympics. That led, in 1967, to a public-relations position at Olympic headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland. She was soon in charge, God pity her, of dealing with the press for the I.O.C. I do not remember anything special about the first press conference she presided over, at Mexico City in 1968, although I was there; she professes to remember it with dismay. "I handled myself very poorly then, I'm afraid," she told me. "Don't you recall how people got up and left the room while I was talking? I was horrified." She has recovered, and gained confidence. By now, she is a *femme formidable*, who handles the press as smoothly and surely as a top-flight bobsled pilot handles his sled, even though she confessed to me—to my amazement—that "sometimes I don't know what's going on."

Mme. Berlioux rarely accompanies Mr. Samaranch on his prodigious travels. "Someone has to stay back in Lausanne and keep things moving," she said. She added that she might, however, accept a recent invitation to deliver a lecture in Saudi Arabia. "It would be amusing to go there and make a speech, where women generally are not welcome," she told me. The Saudis presumably perceive her as a special member of her sex, or maybe they cannot accept the idea that anybody so influential could be a wom-



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an. (It pleases her that since 1981 three countries—Finland, Venezuela, Great Britain—have been represented on the I.O.C. by women.) Last year, at Olympia, Greece, whence all subsequent extravaganzas have sprung, Mme. Berlioux made a speech entitled "Sport, Women, Violence." After remarking, with regret, that in French—*and in Spanish, too*—the word "violence" is of the feminine gender, she said that "all sports worthy of the name are governed by meticulous rules, which are implacable, inviolable, and universal, and intended, on the one hand, to prevent violence, cheating, and anarchy, and, on the other, to lead the best athletes to victory." It was her guess then that in 1982 there had been forty million competitors in athletic events *and probably no more* than four hundred thousand of them had cheated.

Mme. Berlioux, whose own principal hobby is collecting Olympic torches, still swims, spring, summer, and fall, but only for exercise and for fun. "I don't feel well when I don't swim," she said. She looked quite fit. After she stopped swimming competitively, she dabbled in motorbike racing for a while. She also organized the first women's water-polo club in France, which gave her an eye-opening acquaintance with violence in sports. "Well, believe me," she has written, "what went on below water among us in this sport, the fights, the irregularities of all kinds, left nothing to choose between the men's and the women's matches." She founded a club dedicated to synchronized swimming, which some ignorant Americans thought had become extinct when Esther Williams hung up her towel. It is normally very difficult to get a new sport accepted for the Olympics. Synchronized swimming will be on the docket this summer, and arranging that was *nema problema*. Mme. Berlioux simply pointed out to Lord Killanin, when he was technically her boss, that rhythmic gymnastics was considered an approved sport, and asked why, then, not synchronized swimming? His Lordship needed no more persuasion. Nor did the international federation that controls most aquatic happenings; it would be joyous if pole-vaulters landed in pools. Mme. Berlioux doesn't customarily attend many Olympic events. At Sarajevo, when the attention of almost everybody else was focussed on Debbie Armstrong's run in the giant slalom, Madame slipped out of her hotel for-

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tress and went for an hour's walk on an unpopulated slope. When synchronized swimming makes its Olympic début at Los Angeles, though, you can bet your bottom dinar she'll be there.

SHORTLY before the Closing Ceremony—always touching, but never as impressive as the Opening, because many of the athletes have already departed—Mr. Samaranch held his final press conference. Mme. Berlioux was at his side—a lone woman on a dais with eleven men. (She was sniffling; it may have been that stroll in the snow, or plain exhaustion.) It was more or less to have been expected that when Samaranch was asked a particularly barbed question—"How could the Voice of America explain to fifty million Ukrainians," who, the questioner might have added, vastly outnumber the inhabitants of Bhutan, Rwanda, the Solomons, and Western Samoa all together, "that while they can have a seat at the United Nations they can't have their own Olympic team?"—he did not attempt to field that hot potato until Madame, who is unrivalled in the tricky sport of hot-potato juggling, had whispered in his ear. Then he replied blandly that the matter could not be considered until the Ukraine had a National Olympic Committee—though any attempt to establish one, it might reasonably be surmised, would elicit a firm *nyet* from the Kremlin. The I.O.C. president needed no prompting when he declared, "I can at this point state that these Games have been the best of all the Games in the history of the Olympic Games." He thanked the people of Yugoslavia for having brought that about. Next, he announced the award of a decoration called the Olympic Order to seven high-placed Sarajlije. Many of us who had been sequestered in Sarajevo for two weeks or more thought that *all* its permanent residents deserved some suitable token of our appreciation, and that maybe a new medal could be struck to that end—something like, say, the Order of Berlioux, First Class, with Élan.

—E. J. KAHN, JR.

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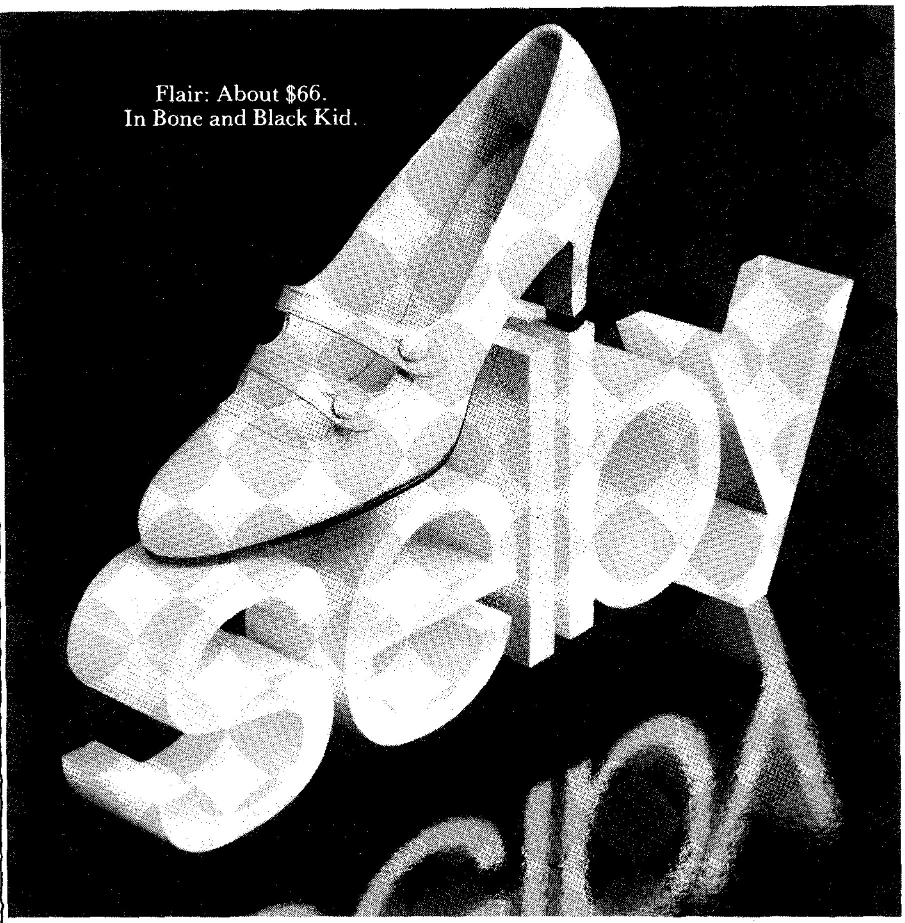

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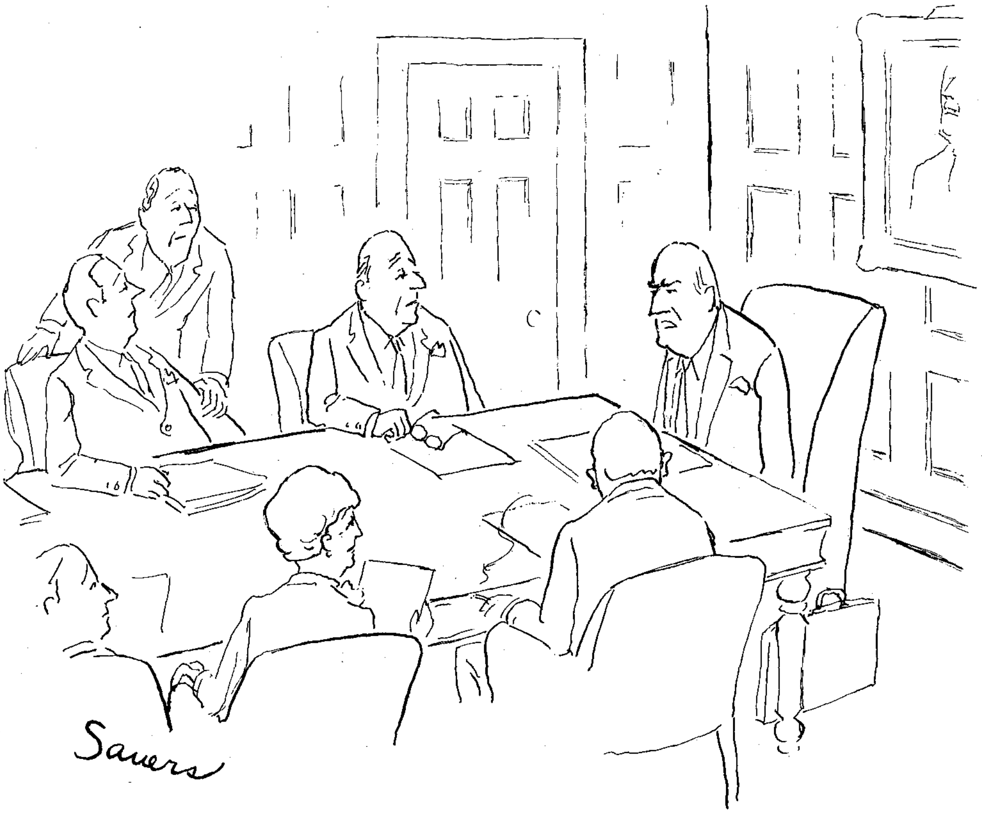
THE THEATRE

Remaking Mankind

INNUMERABLE plays have earned recognition in histories of the stage but are no longer readily producible on a stage, and I have the impression that Clifford Odets' "Awake and Sing!" may be one of them. I call it an impression, and not a conviction, because nobody could possibly judge the value of the play, either as a work deserving a certain place in history or as a source of entertainment to contemporary audiences, by the ramshackle version of it that is currently on view at the Circle in the Square. Odets finished the play when he was twenty-eight, early in 1935; that was his *annus mirabilis*, in the course of which he wrote three other plays as well, working in feverish, fruitful collaboration with the Group Theatre. What an assortment of gifted young radical idealists (if not quite revolutionaries) they were! Their aspiration was to change the entire world for the better, beginning—their idea of reasonableness—with America. The Bronx in the depths of the Great Depression was the setting of "Awake and Sing!," and it was also a symbol: free the inmates of that grim gray prison house of the soul and mankind would take the hint and assume the heroic task of making itself over, in order that, among other welcome consequences, "life shouldn't be printed on dollar bills."

The cast of the first production of "Awake and Sing!" is worth noting, so we can remind ourselves of how distinguished the Group Theatre was from the very start: Art Smith, Stella Adler, Morris Carnovsky, Phoebe Brand, Jules Garfield, Roman Bohnen, Luther Adler, J. E. Bromberg, and Sanford Meisner. The scenery for the play was designed by Boris Aronson, and the director was Harold Clurman, Odets' close friend and, in Odets' phrase, "helpful obstetrician." Most of these people sprang from the same first- or second-generation Jewish American middle-class background, and they felt affection for and revulsion from the family life that Odets depicted. With the exception of Paul Sparer and Benjamin Hendrickson, the cast of the present production of "Awake and Sing!" seems as totally at sea as if the Bronx in the thirties were Tibet in the twelfth century; they are out of touch with the lilting, robust patois in which the play is written, and even with the way the characters ought to move about, embracing each other and recoiling from each other (what we nowadays call body English, and in this case, looking back, we may risk calling body Yiddish). Odets describes Bessie Berger—the Stella Adler role—as a woman who "loves life, likes to laugh, has great resourcefulness, and enjoys living from day to day." Nancy Marchand plays Bessie as a bleak, stiff-jointed, scheming, and unaffectionate Protestant matron; her Jewish accent falters at every turn. The young hero, Ralph Berger, played in the original production by Jules (later John) Garfield, is played by Thomas G. Waites; he brings innocence and ardor to the role, but he lacks the charm that would lead us to hope that the world will someday grant his ambition "to get to first base." We fear he will remain where he is, and that is not what the optimistic Odets, himself a prodigious hitter of home runs, wished Ralph's fate to be. Dick Latessa is touching as Myron Berger, the contented failed father of the family, and Harry Hamlin brings a necessary hardboiled vigor, but no Jewishness, to the role of Moe Axelrod. As Sam Feinschreiber, a classic lonely and unloved nebbish, fresh from the Old Country, Mr. Hendrickson works a trifle too hard for his own good but by doing so helps a dying play to stay alive. The calculatedly ugly Bronx-apartment setting is by John Conklin, the costumes are by Jennifer von Mayrhauser, the lighting is by Richard Nelson, and the heavy-handed direction is by Theodore Mann. We miss that jaunty, irrepressible Roman candle Harold Clurman on this occasion, as we do on so many others. —BRENDAN GILL



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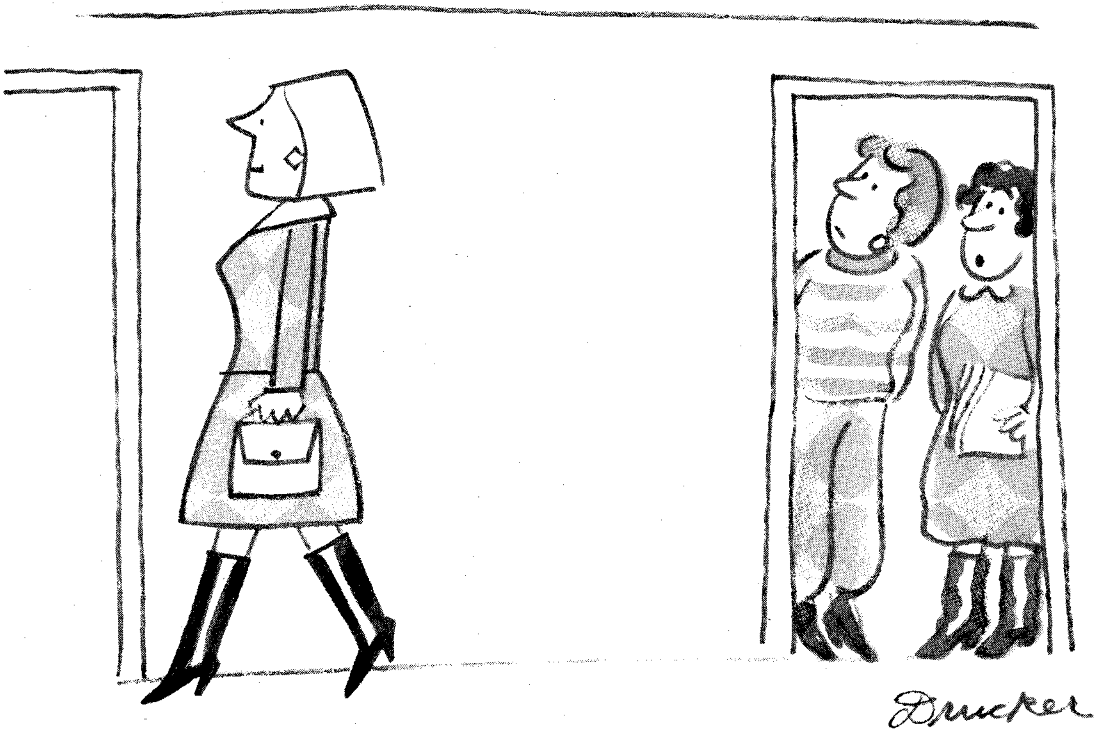
DEPARTMENT OF AMPLIFICATION

As if people in Kansas City didn't already worry enough about what Easterners think of their town, the Russians have got into the act. Ironically, the Russians struck at a time when those residents of Kansas City who spend a lot of time glancing over their shoulders, on the lookout for barbs from the East Coast, might have been tempted to lower their guard. *Town & Country* had just run a story on Kansas City that began, "Crimson warmed the boundless horizon, a brilliant red inferno silhouetting the spires and trees of the City of Kansas," and then went on to get kind of flowery. Residents who still suffer from the Midwestern ailment I have called rubophobia—not fear of rubes but fear of being thought a rube—must have had some of their fears put to rest by reading *Town & Country's* first description of a Kansas City house: "Dawn's light played through early château glass into Betty and Paul Henson's three-story center hall, shattering into a delicate design of tangerine, cranberry, plum." What happened next was expressed bluntly by the headline of an item that the New York *Times* ran in October: "SOVIET FILM MAKES KANSAS CITY REGRET HOSPITALITY."

The headline surprised me. In Kansas City—which, I should acknowledge from the start, happens to be my home town—hospitality is so deeply ingrained that I couldn't imagine anything short of a Class A felony causing anyone to regret having extended it. I had been aware, though, that a Russian television documentary on Kansas City was being made. I had run across the Soviet camera crew when I was in town working on a story for this magazine which dealt partly with the circular struggle that civic boosters have had with the question of how Kansas City is presented to the world—a struggle that included a "glamour city" period of five or six years characterized by press-agent stories with headlines like "COWTOWN NO MORE," a recantation of their anti-cow ways by the glamour gang in 1977 in front of the Rotary Club, and an eventual decision that Kansas City could take pride in proclaiming itself World Food Capital. Since then, everything had been going pretty well on the image front in my home town. There was no World Food Capital counterclaim forthcoming from anyplace like Minneapolis. Even those civic leaders who, perhaps in a rubophobiacal frenzy, led Kansas City into the glamour-city period must have realized from the *Town & Country* article that people are a lot more likely to consider you sophisticated once you quit going around saying how sophisticated you are. Then the Russians struck.

I had been seated with the Russians at a banquet honoring Rod Turnbull, sometimes known in Kansas City as Mr. Agriculture, who was one of the people they had already spoken to about their film. Turnbull was the agriculture editor of the Kansas City *Star* for many years; after his retirement, he began a new career as director of public affairs for the Kansas City Board of Trade, the country's principal trading floor for the hard red winter wheat that is used to make bread. Turnbull has become accustomed to having foreigners turn up in his office. Particularly since Morton Sosland, who runs a Kansas City trade magazine called *Milling & Baking News*, broke the story of a huge Russian purchase of American grain in the early seventies, foreign visitors with an interest in agriculture have routinely stopped in Kansas City to have a tour of the trading floor and a session with Sosland or some other grain expert. The international attention, in fact, was one element in persuading civic leaders that being identified as an agricultural center is not cause for unalloyed shame. A couple of days before the banquet, I happened to talk to Turnbull just after he met the Russian camera crew. By that time, I had worked up a certain amount of curiosity about what the Russians were up to; I had taken to checking on their schedule now and then with Anne Canfield, of the Chamber of Commerce, who was, naturally, extending Kansas City hospitality to them just as fast as she could dish it out. I wasn't surprised when she told me that the Russians had spent the day at the Harry S Truman Library, but the day after that, for reasons I couldn't fathom, they had asked her to recommend a well-kept cemetery they might film. I was also startled at the report that they were thinking of being around when people emerged from Sunday services at a church that, because it happens to be in a rather grandiosely named residential district, happens to be called Country Club Christian. After I moved away from Kansas City, I discovered that people who grew up elsewhere see something funny about names like



"That's another thing I hate about her—she's crease-resistant."

Country Club Christian Church, but could the name also sound droll in Russian? When I asked Turnbull for his impression of the Russians, he said, "I've met these Soviet folks before. These people are technicians—mostly city boys. They don't know anything about wheat."

Too true. Furthermore, they don't seem to care about wheat. The narrator of the Russian film did mention the Board of Trade ("Greed!" he said. "Perhaps, in its contemporary form, it shows itself especially vividly in Kansas City just here on the main floor of the Exchange"), and he did mention the Midwestern farms that are the basis for so much of Kansas City's business ("We did not manage to talk to the owners of many farms that we passed by: the houses were boarded up"). But when I looked through a translation of the documentary's narration—a transcript was provided by ABC's program "20/20," which showed the film to some of the Kansas City people involved and asked for their response—about the closest thing I could find to any mention of Kansas City's importance as an agricultural center was a statement about the Board of Trade: "One finds not just petty profiteering crooks on the Exchange's main floor. Large agricultural corporations watching the current situations and trends very carefully are also represented here." That, I'm certain, is not the sort of presentation as World Food Capital the boosters had in mind.

I suppose I should have been able to guess why the Russians wanted to visit a cemetery. They needed some tombstones for the Harry Truman sequence. The film's narrator said that Truman had been elected senator by the simple device of voting fifty thousand names taken from tombstones, and that bit of narration was illustrated, in a manner of speaking, by a shot of a graveyard. The film had a lot to say about Harry Truman, none of it good. It said that he was installed as Vice-President by "influential circles in the American upper bourgeoisie"—the same I.C.A.U.B. that, the film implied, later had something to do with the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt. It said that Truman ordered the annihilation of hundreds of thousands of innocent people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki purely for the purpose of frightening the Soviet Union. (I think it's safe to say that among films dealing with Kansas City the Russian documentary set a record

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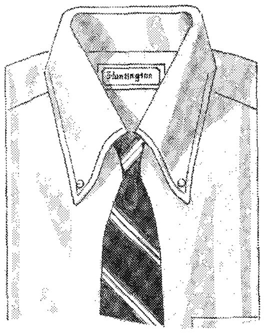

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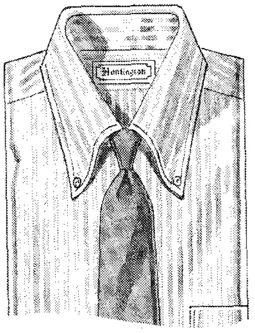

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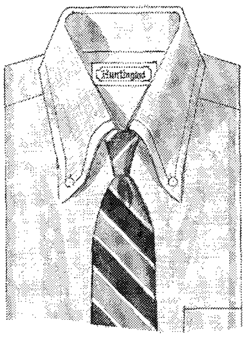

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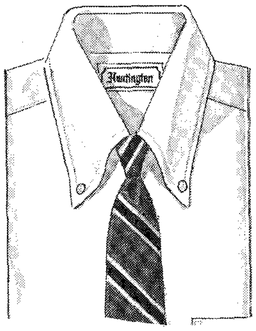

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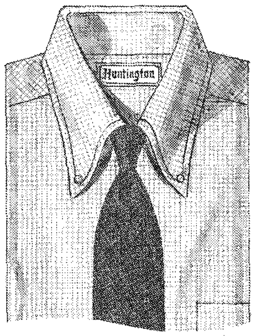

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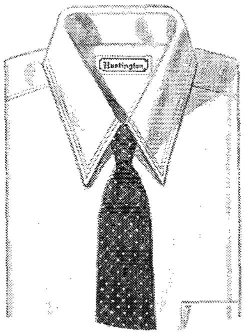

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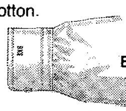

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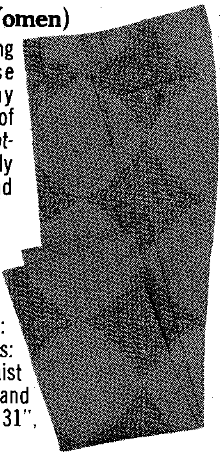

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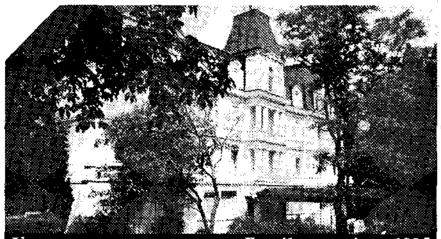

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for number of frames showing atomic-bomb victims in Japan.) It said that he was "mediocre" and "just a provincial executive." It's no fun having your town's only President depicted as a crook and a mass murderer, but for some Kansas City boosters it must have been that "provincial" that really hurt.

I want to put to rest right away any notion that the outrage expressed in Kansas City about the Russian film is an indication that people in my home town are defensive or hypersensitive. Nobody expects visitors to see the city strictly through early-château glass. In fact, Arthur Brisbane was inspired by the *Town & Country* article to write a column in the Kansas City *Times* volunteering some descriptions of less exalted neighborhoods, of the sort that the *Town & Country* reporter didn't get to. "A shimmering yellow orb sits reluctantly upon the West Bottoms, once a mighty nexus of the meatpacking and smelting arts," Brisbane wrote of the old stockyard district. "The fertile soil here, paved over in a burst of industrial passion, forms the meeting place of two mighty rivers that, though polluted, still resemble rivers in the traditional sense. Here the faded bricks of old buildings are warmed to orange hues by brilliant sunsets. A nationally famous truck stop greets the 18-wheeled set with piping hot coffee. Kemper Arena, which has collapsed only once, sparkles a brilliant white, challenging its neighbors to grab the future by the horns."

Still, some people in my home town were genuinely upset about the film, so I tried to find something positive about it I could mention—just to make everyone feel a little better. I couldn't come up with much cheerful to say, though, beyond pointing out the possibility that, from a certain point of view, voting names off tombstones could be considered a nice way to keep in mind those who have passed on. Although the *Town & Country* article's description of housing in Kansas City said that "the lovely livability has endured, and not only for the rapidly expanding millionaire class," the Russian presentation of the way people in Kansas City live seemed to consist mainly of slum closeups combined with long shots of mud. For a while, about the only cheerful note I could think of to strike in conversations with the folks at home was to point out that the Soviet film was such a dreary and heavy-handed piece of thirties agitprop

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that the most loyal Party member would have switched channels five minutes into it—even if the only alternative was the repeat of a guided tour through the new hydroelectric plant at Nizhne-Kolymsk.

Then, going through the transcript again, I realized that I could make one comforting comment: the film isn't really about Kansas City. It could have been made in any city large enough to have an unemployment office, and a lot of it was; for instance, the Russians seem to have preferred shots of a bum in what was obviously Lafayette Park in Washington to any bum they could find in Kansas City. Except for the opportunity Kansas City presented to discuss the level of destruction at Hiroshima and the level of greed on the floor of the Board of Trade, it could have been Cleveland or New Orleans. In Cleveland or New Orleans, though, the Russian narrator couldn't have said that the viewers were about to see "what one may truly call Middle America." When I asked one of the Russians I met at the Turnbull dinner why Kansas City had been chosen, he said, "Well, I went to New York and people said this is not really America, and I went to San Francisco and people said this is not really America. So we came to Kansas City to see a typical American city."

I've admitted that, having grown up in Kansas City at a time when it was widely known as the Heart of America, I have never quite rid myself of the assumption that it is in fact really America—the norm against which everything else must be judged. I'm not ready to concede, though, that being the real America encompasses being Middle America or typical America. When people first started talking about the Middle American, that humdrum schlemiel nobody really wanted to be, it seemed to mean someone in the middle of the pack economically and maybe educationally, but gradually the definition seemed to drift toward the middle of the country—coming to rest somewhere around my home town. It should be obvious that nobody who has even a passing acquaintance with early-château glass is properly described as a Middle American. It should also be obvious that a city's role as the real America—real in the sense, say, that any deviation from its speech pattern constitutes an accent—does not include being some finely tuned piece of demography that can serve as typical.

I have had misgivings about Kansas

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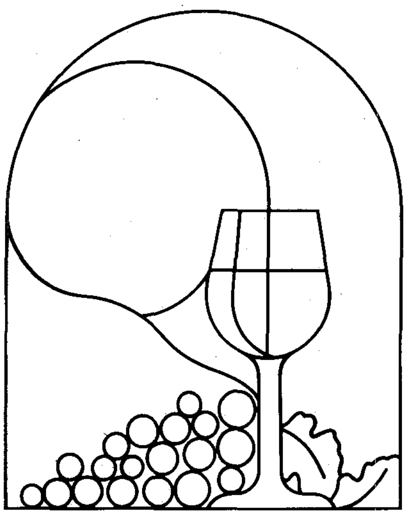

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City's supposed typicality for some time—ever since I read in the *Star* that Charlton Heston said a new movie of his was being tried out in Kansas City because "a film will play in Kansas City almost exactly to the percentile that it plays in the rest of the country." Is that a compliment? Not long after the Russian documentary had provoked some of the people in my home town to regret their hospitality, the Kansas City *Times* reported that because of its typicality Kansas City had been chosen as a test market for competing brands of upscale cookies—a Duncan Hines cookie from Procter & Gamble and Grandma's cookies from Frito-Lay. "World War III has broken out in the cookie aisles in Kansas City," a Frito-Lay executive told a reporter from *Fortune*. I suppose I should be pleased that Kansas Citians got an early crack at Grandma's cookies and the new Duncan Hines cookie—not to speak of such other test-marketed products as Cinch (a dishwashing detergent that specializes in cleaning "scritches") and Style shampoo and an ersatz barbecue sandwich that the McDonald's people call McRib. Still, I'm not crazy about the idea of a Frito-Lay spokesman in Dallas saying, "Kansas City is so American. It gives us a good cross-section." It all sounds a little too much like "How will it play in Peoria?"—the question the Nixon White House people were always asking one another when they should have been asking, "How will it play in court?" My misgivings were brought into focus when I began reading about ABC's film on the nuclear holocaust, "The Day After." According to the New York *Times*, the scriptwriter had chosen "to set the movie in the environs of Kansas City—chiefly in the university town of Lawrence, Kan.—partly because it epitomized Middle America." Now we're talking about World War III. Not World War III in the cookie aisles. World War III.

—CALVIN TRILLIN

•

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[*From the Police Beat in the Greenwich Gazette*]

The owner of a house on Rainbow Drive in Riverside reported the theft of jewelry from her home. However, when police arrived to investigate the burglary, they were not allowed inside the house because the woman was waxing the floors. Police told the woman to contact them when it would be possible to investigate the burglary.

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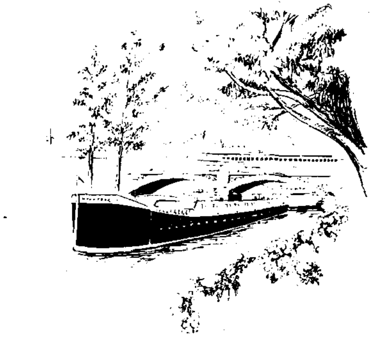

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

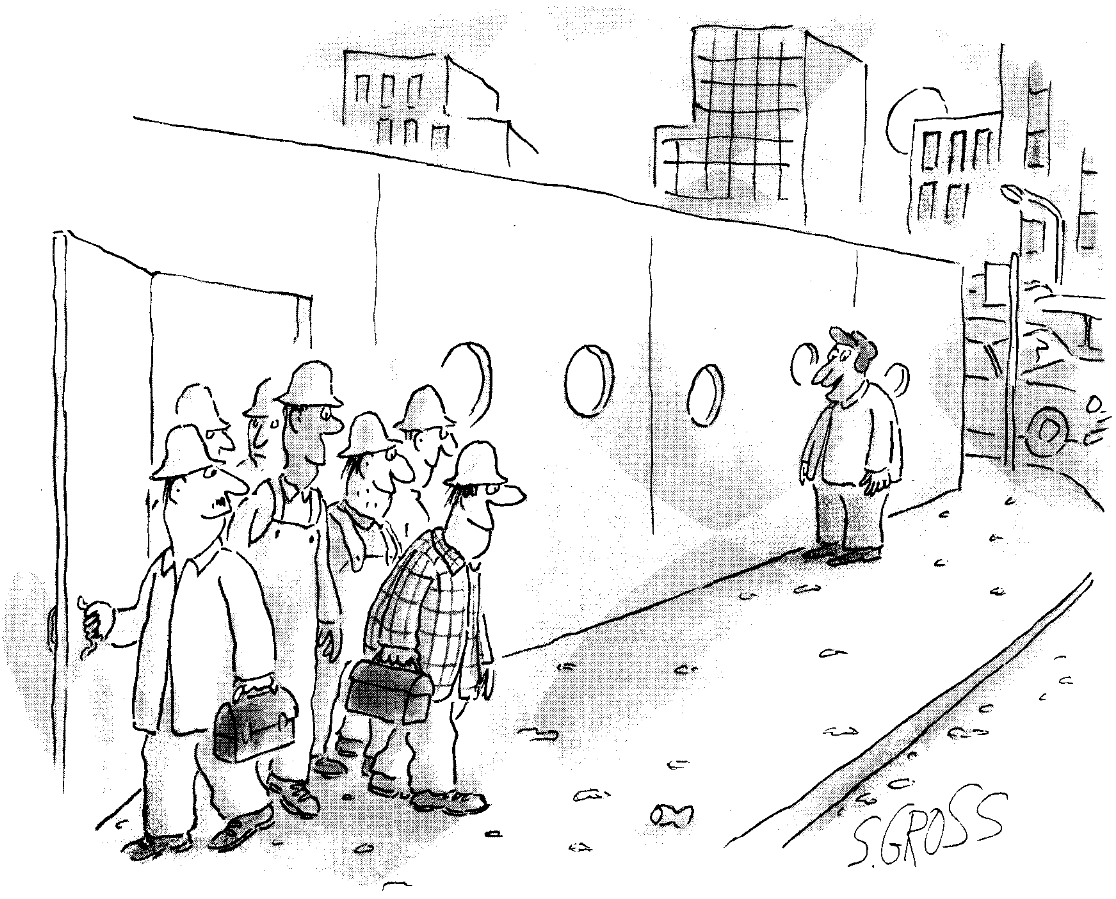
King Candy

"SPLASH" has a friendly, tantalizing magic. In the prologue, Allen Bauer, a quiet, moony kid of eight on an excursion ship off Cape Cod, hears a siren song and plummets into the water; before the child mermaid who yearned for a playmate can get a grip on him, he's pulled out. The little sea nymph looks back at him longingly, rubs the tears out of her eyes, and, with a pert toss of her tail, dives down into the deep. Twenty years later, Allen (Tom Hanks) is a tall, skinny fellow with curly dark hair that stands up above a rounded, childlike forehead; he looks vaguely like a question mark. Allen runs the family wholesale-produce business in New York; it's a frenzied, disaster-prone business, and Allen's older brother Freddie (John Candy) is delighted to let him run it—that leaves Freddie free to play. But Freddie also worries, because he loves Allen, and Allen—obscurely disgruntled—never seems to go crazy about a girl. It all changes one weekend when Allen gets into a funk at the wedding of one of his workers and, hearing the siren song again, heads up alone to Cape Cod. He falls off a tiny motorboat, which whizzes around, knocking him unconscious; when he wakes up on the shore, we see who has saved him—it's the full-grown, svelte young mermaid (Daryl Hannah), with long blond tresses and the iridescent color tones of a goldfish. She kisses him and disappears in the water.

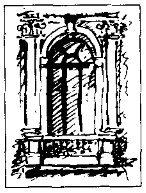
Daryl Hannah—she was the murderous dancing doll in "Blade Runner"—is lithe and strong-shouldered, so that the tail and fins, which elongate her body, seem to complete her. A mermaid's eyes must, of course, be blue, and Hannah has wide, piercingly blue eyes; she also has smiling curvy lips and the look of a beatifically sexy Nordic goddess, yet her flashing tail and fins are like a butterfly's wings—they're her most ravishing feature. But Allen doesn't see that part of her—not consciously, anyway. When this lovely nymph, whose scaly extremities are transformed into legs when she's on dry land, trails him to New York City, he's totally smitten by her but reacts to her unfamiliarity with American customs as if she were from another country, a stranger, rather than from a magical species, and strange. To Allen, she's like a dream of a Swedish au-pair girl.

Made by the team who were responsible for the 1982 comedy "Night Shift"—the director Ron Howard and the writers Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel—along with, this time, Bruce Jay Friedman, "Splash" is the opposite of deadpan comedy. Even the bit players let you know how they feel, and Tom Hanks has the expressiveness of a little kid who can't hide a thing. When Allen is with his au pair, flickering shades of unbelievable joy cross his face, and he's so unused to simple pleasure it gives him tics. Ron Howard has been an actor for most of his thirty years, and he has a knack for bringing the sweetness out of his performers without lingering on it. He keeps a lot of activity going, and the produce market seems like a real place of business, with a bunch of raffish guys hanging around and Allen kept on the go every minute. (He barely has time to look at the aquarium he keeps in his office.) You get the sense that Allen isn't vitally interested in the business he inherited or in anything else, until he meets this amazing foreign girl and starts looking dazed. Daryl Hannah's unself-consciousness about being naked is the key to the film's charm; the mermaid is simply innocent of the ways of the world, and that includes clothing. She stares at Allen with undisguised adoration, and, of course, not being human, she's innocently sexy.

Ron Howard has a happy touch, and he's the first film director who has let John Candy loose. This gigantic, chubby Puck has been great in brief appearances (seventeen movies in the past five years), but the role of Freddie the playboy is the first role big enough for him to make the kind of impression he made in the SCTV shows and in his guest shots on "The New Show." John Candy is perfectly named; he's a



"Hey, you guys were terrific!"



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mountainous lollipop of a man, and preposterously lovable. As Freddie, who carries a cooler with beer when he goes to play racquetball with Allen and appears on the court cradling a beer in one hand and smoking a king-size cigarette, he doesn't have a hypocritical bone in his body. When he encourages his brother to give in to temptation, he's not playing devil's advocate; Freddie the girl chaser gives in to his own giddiest impulses—he doesn't want Allen to be deprived. Candy has the same function here that Michael Keaton, the brainstorming hipster of "Night Shift," had. He stirs things up and spars with Tom Hanks. As a bon vivant and man about town, Freddie takes an almost lewd pleasure in his own vanity; he fancies himself debonair and light on his feet, and he is. But he also makes you aware of his bulk by the tricks in his verbal timing: when Hanks has said something to him and you expect him to answer, his hesitation—it's like a few seconds of hippo torpor—is what makes his answer funny. There's a certain amount of aggression built into a frame as big as Candy's: he simply occupies more space than other people do. But Candy doesn't have anything like John Belushi's insane volatility or the gleam in his eyes that told you he was about to go haywire and smash things up; Candy is the soul of amiability—it's just an awfully large soul. Freddie is the older brother you always wanted to have. He's Falstaff at fourteen, and the picture probably wouldn't work without him; he doesn't add weight, he adds bounce and imagination.

There is a whole cartoonish side of the film, involving a nuthead scientist obsessed with finding a mermaid, and a different, quite horrible mad scientist who's eager to perform sadistic experiments on one; most of this involves a lot of chasing around, and basically it's dumb. But Eugene Levy, of SCTV, who plays the nut case, is inspired; his voice is a raspy, deep foghorn, and his wiry hair and his specs are so vivid they seem to have taken over the man. Levy exults in the comic-book eccentricity of the role; everything he does is insanely deliberate—every particle in his body waits for instructions from the paranoiac brain. (As the sadist, Richard B. Shull doesn't have much to do. Mercifully.) It's easy to see the reason for all this subplot busywork: the writers needed to supply danger and urgency to keep the film in motion, and demented scientists were the best thing they could come up with. (And this yock material may actually be a relief to the part of the audience that likes the familiarity of TV humor.)

"Splash" is frequently on the verge of being more wonderful than it is—more poetic, a little wilder. That verge isn't a bad place to be, but the movie doesn't go far enough with, for example, the mermaid's delight in her discovery of the sounds that street musicians make, and of earth music in general. There's a fine joke that's set in Bloomingdale's and involves Allen's pressing the heroine to tell him what her name is, and her letting out a series of shrill, rhythmic sounds that remind you of dolphins and whales. (Her quick mind is dolphinlike, too.) But though the moviemakers encourage their young hero to plunge into the unknown, too often they keep their own feet on the ground. The writing is likable and clever, but in limited ways, and the plot is an encumbrance—it doesn't release the possibilities in the theme, it shunts them aside.

Some scenes let you down. When the nuthead, who has been stalking the girl, spots her and Allen leaving a hotel where the President of the United States has been guest speaker at a fund-raising bash, he sprays her with water from a hose. She metamorphoses and is helpless on the sidewalk, a fish out of water, and is surrounded by press and photographers with strobe flashes. And Allen, who is separated from her in the melee, is stunned and somewhat repelled by her turning into a mermaid. This doesn't make much sense in terms of his character (he thought he saw a mermaid when he was eight, so he should feel vindicated), and it leaves a vacuum at the center of the film. Matters aren't helped any by his being thought to be a sea creature, too. He's caught and put in a tank in a back-room laboratory in the Museum of Natural History, and when the mermaid is brought in, wrapped in a net, and lowered into the tank with him, while the scientists observe them, he's frightened of her and doesn't go near her. The picture seems all balled

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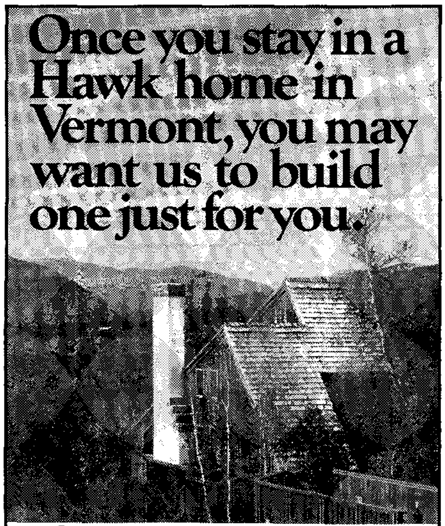

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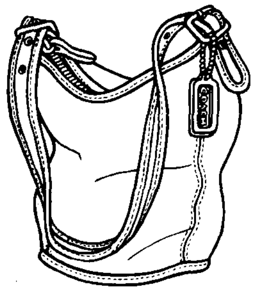
up, because his confused emotions aren't what a magical story calls for; he fails the first test of his love—he's not imaginative enough to deserve this treasure. It isn't until he's let out and Freddie talks sense to him that he pulls himself together and the movie gets back on course (but nothing he does afterward quite makes up for the revulsion he showed). Meanwhile, the nuthead scientist sees her and is appalled at what he has done. She's huddled in misery at the bottom of the tank, tendrils of spun-gold hair waving around her in the water. She's like a Pre-Raphaelite illustration for a fairy tale about a princess in captivity; it's a lyrical image of total depression—she looks near death.

Allen finally goes to the rescue, and everything ends as it should, except that we're a little shorted on poetry even at the very last. We need to feel the contrast between the tank she was dying in and the oceanic freedom she returns to; we need to feel that she reënters a boundless magical realm. What we get is too modest, too confined. The underwater photography is dreamily satisfying, and Daryl Hannah moves like the glistening vision of mermaids that we all carry from childhood, yet more time is given to the cars chasing the car that takes her to New York Harbor than is given to the final mysteries of the deep. (There don't seem to be many.) And there's just one redeeming detail in that stupid car chase: the full blast of Eugene Levy's voice as he says "Move!" But the picture has a generous spirit: even this paranoid has a change of heart. And the heroine's having a tail gives romantic love the edge it needs. "Splash" gives you part of a movie you've always wanted to see; it's entrancing enough to suggest how blissful it might have been. The day after you've seen it, you may find yourself running the images over in your mind, and grinning.

God, how I have come to hate car chases. They've become an empty ritual. In "Against All Odds," it's a macho contest between Jeff Bridges in a Porsche and James (The Snake) Woods in a Ferrari; racing side by side, they play their game of chicken through heavy traffic on Sunset Boulevard. And it's so grotesquely pointless that the embarrassed director, Taylor Hackford, tries to salve his conscience by including an apology: Bridges, the narrator, tells us that it was stupid and he shouldn't have done



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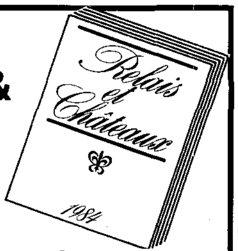

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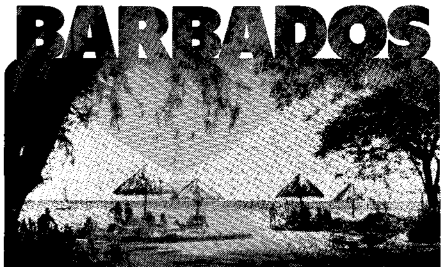

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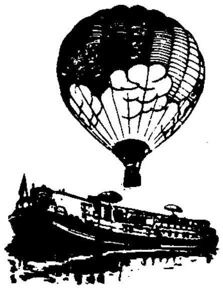
it. The apology should take in the whole revved-up movie, which is of the "everybody uses everybody" genre, set in swank surroundings and outfitted with electronic music to make you twitch. It's a mystery thriller, but the only mystery is how Hackford worked up the energy to keep going from one hollow scene to the next, and its idea of thrills is to have the one likable person in the cast (Swoosie Kurtz) try to open a safe while she's being menaced by a Doberman. (If I never saw another fistfight or car chase or Doberman attack, I wouldn't have any feeling of loss. And that goes for Rottweilers, too.)

Some of the first reviews of "Against All Odds" have praised the gaudy chase—maybe because that's the only time in the movie that the reviewers were absolutely sure what was going on: i.e., nothing. Suggested by the 1947 Jacques Tourneur suspense film "Out of the Past," which had a slight and rather vaporous plot centering on a cunning femme fatale (Jane Greer), "Against All Odds" runs hog-wild on plot. Lifting mostly from "Chinatown" and "North Dallas Forty," it has so many convoluted double crosses that each time you're told what was "really" going on behind the scene you just witnessed you care less. The one thing the picture never lets you forget is that capitalist decadence permeates the society. The femme fatale is now Rachel Ward, who steals and kills, lies all the time, and makes love alternately to Bridges, a pro football player, and to Woods, a gamblin' man. But she isn't really a bad girl: it turns out (disappointingly) that she's just confused, from having grown up in a nest of vipers, with a real-estate-tycoon mother (played with considerable cool by Jane Greer) and a smoothly villainous stepfather (a hambone special by Richard Widmark).

Retro hipness is in the air now, and, like a lot of other directors, Hackford is trying to prove he's hot stuff. "Against All Odds" has some of the eagerness to impress that marked the 1981 Michael Mann picture "Thief;" it has the same cinematographer, Donald Thorin, with the impersonal bravura of his high-definition, overlighted shots, and it, too, comes close to being a parody of *film noir*. Some sequences should earn their place in the annals of camp. My first choice is the sex-and-sweat scene that takes place in a studio reproduction of an ancient Mayan steam house at Chichên



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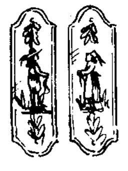

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Itzá. Bridges, who has been hired by Woods to find Rachel Ward so that she can be brought back, has instead, after much searching, found her in a fishing village and run off with her, and they've been going to one remote spot after another, giving us a tour of Yucatán and Quintana Roo, with special attention to such sites as Isla Mujeres, off Cancún, and the Mayan city of Tulum. But there they are, having sex high up in the jungle in the ruins of Chichén Itzá, and who should walk in on them but Alex Karras, the trainer of Bridges' football team. The love-in-the-ruins scene is pretty funny anyway. Bridges' musculature has become excessive (every position he takes looks like a pose for the Mr. Universe contest), and here in the steam house, with the inscrutable faces of stone deities peering down at them, he and Rachel Ward, naked and writhing together, seem to be gilded, like the dead girl in "Goldfinger." When Karras casually trots in and just stands there, we're probably meant to think important thoughts, such as "There's no place for lovers to escape to in this corrupt world." But a hoot or a giggle is more to the point. Alex Karras—the man who punched out a horse in "Blazing Saddles"—looks as if he'd walked into the wrong movie; he's outclassed by these burnished love wrestlers and the fancy electronic zhooms and vroops on the track.

Probably Taylor Hackford, the director of "An Officer and a Gentleman"—who served in the Peace Corps, made investigative-reporting documentaries for the public-television station in Los Angeles which were highly regarded, and is married to Lynne Littman, the director of the nuclear-calamity movie "Testament"—is perfectly serious about "Against All Odds." He may be more than serious: the scenes aren't shaped to get anywhere, so even though the movie hops about L.A. and Mexico, the effect is static—in the way that obsessional fantasies often are. Probably, as Hackford saw it—he commissioned the script (by Eric Hughes)—the Bridges character, trying to locate the girl, was a searcher-investigator entering a world where he didn't understand who was connected with whom. And this would mean an opportunity to expose the full extent of slick, modern corruption.

It's this seriousness, I think, that fouls him up—he wants to indict everything and everybody, and whip up a hot delirium. That impressive actor

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Dorian Harewood seems to be in the movie (as the gambler's flunky) just so he can learn that "nobody in Beverly Hills will ever do business with a black man." Saul Rubinek is a skillful comedian, but as a loathsome, coke-snorting lawyer who routinely sells out his clients he just makes you feel queasy. Even Jeff Bridges can't do much with his role; he's used as a set of waxed and polished pectorals, because the director is so far into his big subject that he's lost his perspective on character. And Rachel Ward, the celebrated model turned glamour star who's at the center of it all and is meant to be irresistible, must think that by not acting she communicates mystery; there's no way to know when the character is lying and when she's not—everything she says has equal weightlessness. As the secretary to the wormy lawyer, Swoosie Kurtz has only two or three minutes onscreen, but she gets a relationship going with the audience; she draws you in, so that you put yourself in her place. She's the only member of the cast who doesn't seem to have been pulped. Rachel Ward can't get anything going. She's like a teenybopper imitating Joan Collins, and people coming out of the theatre were saying, "She's not as beautiful as I thought."

—PAULINE KAEL

•

HOW'S THAT AGAIN? DEPARTMENT

[*From the Times*]

"I could have gone to another good school and sat on the bench for two years," said John Moran, a 6-foot-8-inch freshman from St. Francis Prep in Flushing, Queens. "Or I could have gone to a school that was not so good academically, but where I could have started. N.Y.U. offered me both."

•

Still abundant on the North American Atlantic coast, horseshoe crabs are exploited as animal fodder, fish bait, fertilizer and biomedicine. They are usually harvested when they come ashore to breed, a practice which needs to be controlled.—*Focus, newsletter of the World Wildlife Fund–U.S.*

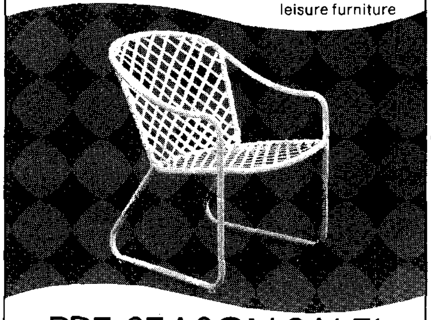
As if their lives weren't dismal enough.

•

At the Tar Heel Writers Roundtable Conference held last week in Raleigh, Barbara Stroup won second prize in the Juvenile Fiction division for her story "Three Gullible Brothers."

Writers from all over the East Coast as far as Arizona attended the conference.—*Tryon (N.C.) Daily Bulletin.*

Writers get a little confused sometimes.



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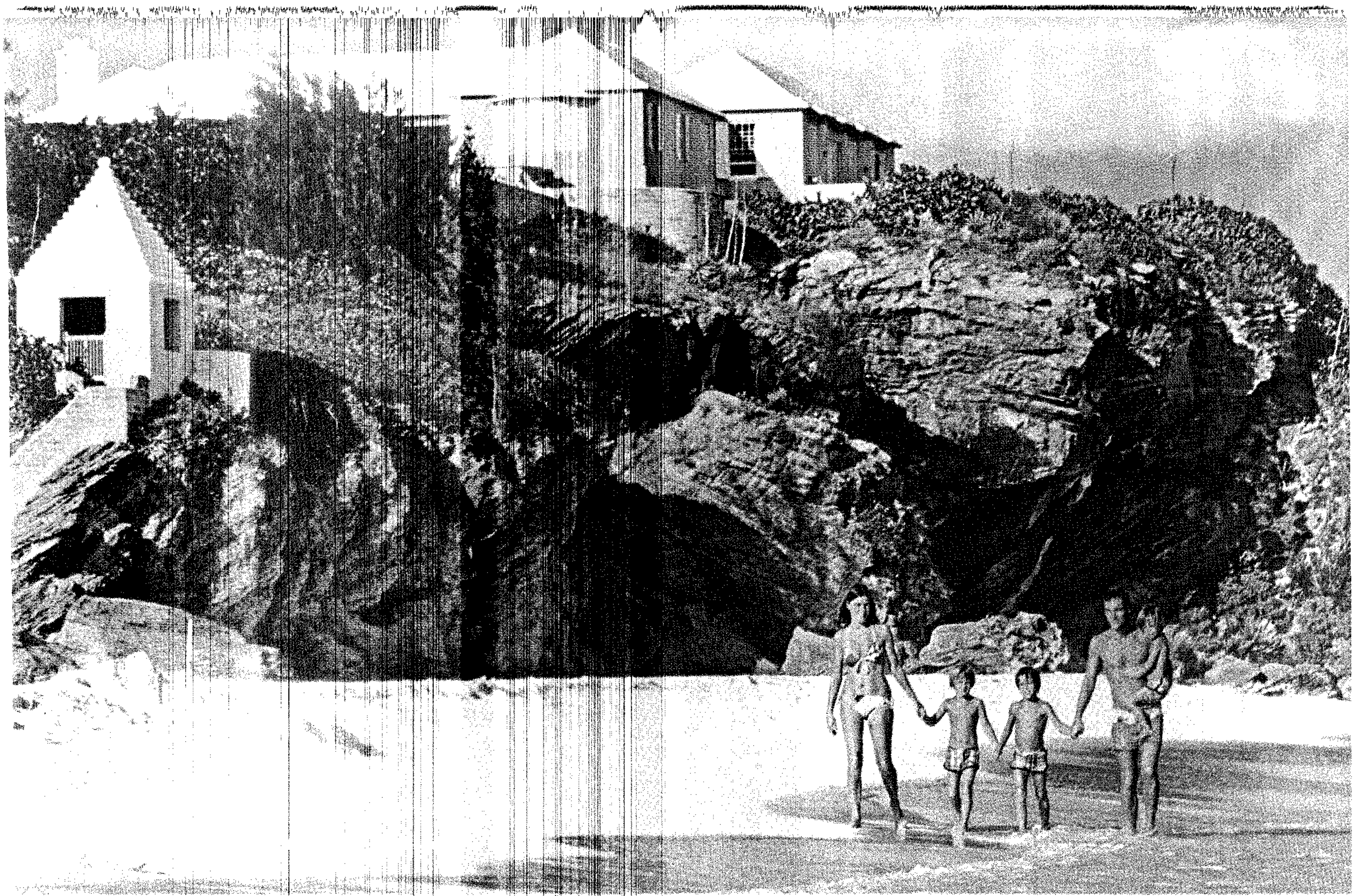

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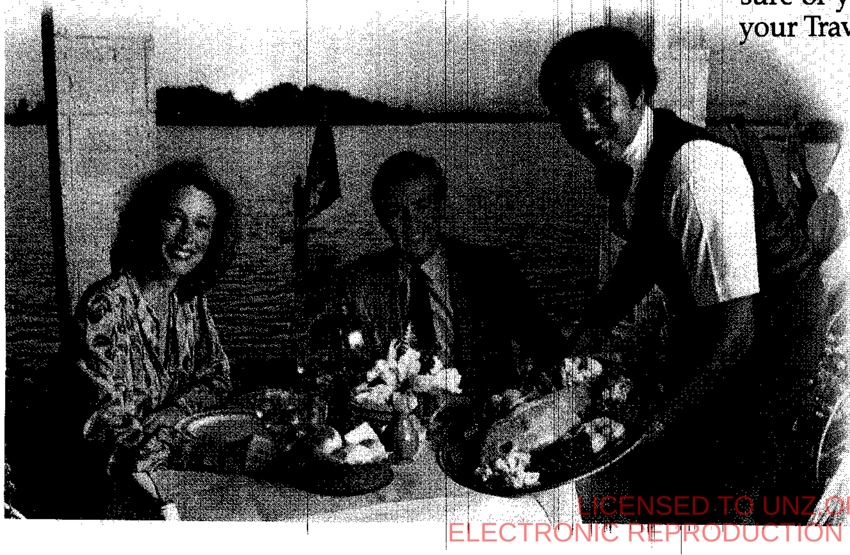

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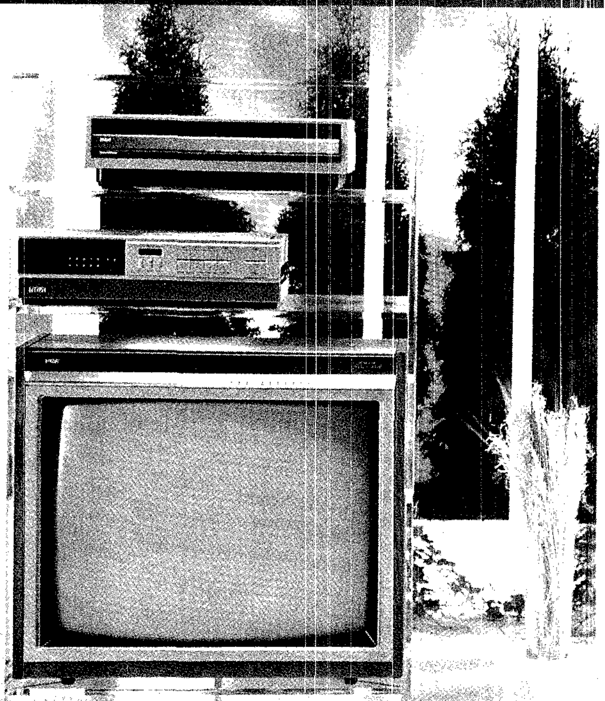

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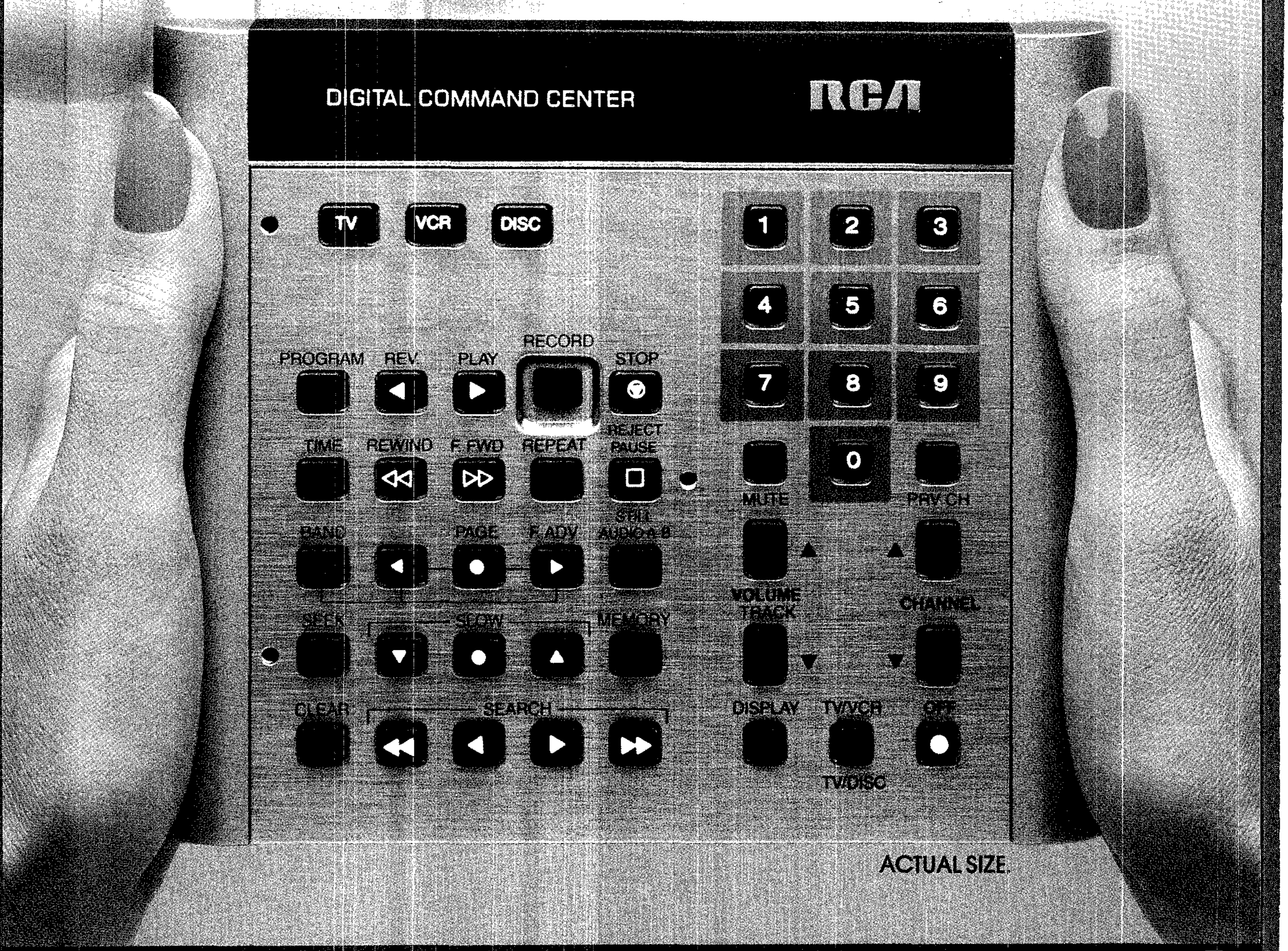
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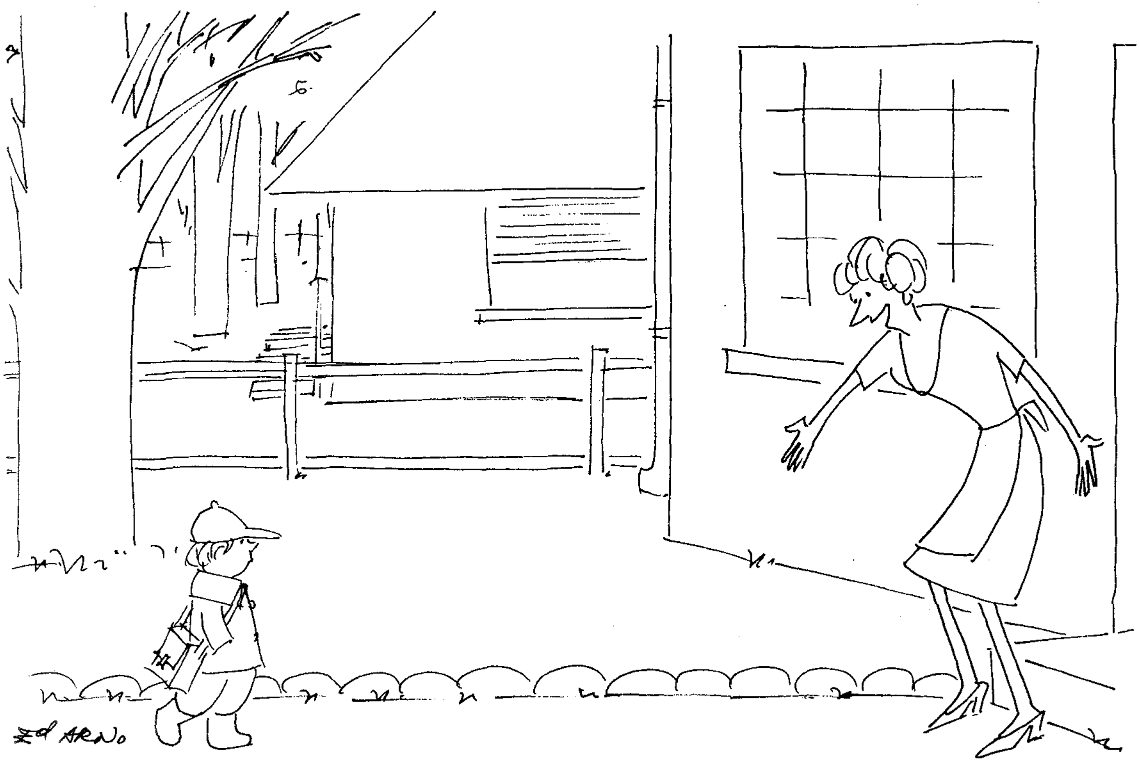
MUSICAL EVENTS

Parade

A REMARKABLE run of orchestral concerts in Carnegie Hall began on Monday, February 27th, with a program given by the Symphony Orchestra of the Curtis Institute, conducted by Sergiu Celibidache. Mr. Celibidache was making his American début. His engagement was a feather in Curtis's cap, for he has become a legend: a conductor who insists on between ten and eighteen rehearsals for each concert; who stipulates that players and soloists should have no other commitments during the rehearsal period; who now makes no records. Thirty and twenty years ago, when Mr. Celibidache was just one conductor among many, he was deemed vigorous (but not always: "The Record Year" in 1952 found his Mozart early G-Minor Symphony "sleepy"), piquantly unpredictable, seldom dull, but an uneven stylist (his recording of Tchaikovsky's Fifth, for example, being "a very affected reading . . . full of exaggerated tempi and dynamics"). The Curtis concert revealed him to be a formidable orchestra trainer. The student playing was wonderfully exact and disciplined. There were pianissimi so soft that they fell below the ordinary fidget-and-rustle noise level of a filled hall. There was exquisite ensemble, meticulously tempered balance, phrasing polished to a phon and a microsecond. What one missed was any sense of musical impulse. Rossini's "Gazza Ladra" overture was sedate—grotesquely so if one allowed a memory of Beecham or of Toscanini to cross one's mind. Debussy's "Iberia" was very carefully done—the colors applied with diacritical precision, the heady, precipitate gaiety of the score altogether absent. The Prelude and Liebestod emerged as an exercise in dynamics and sonorities which was perfectly executed. Prokofiev's rackety "Scythian Suite," a coarse parergon to "The Rite of Spring," had more vitality. How could it not, with all that banging and braying? Yet even here the players seemed more drilled, as if for a gym display, than personally exuberant. The evening was extraordinary for its demonstration of the instrumental excellence that seventeen rehearsals can achieve; its educational value, for listeners as well as players, was not in question.

TUESDAY'S concert, given by the Philadelphia Orchestra (forty-eight of whose members are Curtis graduates), conducted by Riccardo Muti, was full of grace. The main work was Bruckner's Fourth Symphony. The performance was fluent, lyrical, admirably proportioned, and warmly played. It fell pleasingly on the ear. The symphony was preceded by Berlioz's cantata "The Death of Cleopatra," the young composer's third unsuccessful shot at winning the Prix de Rome. "Cleopatra," which has been recorded by Jennie Tourel, Janet Baker, Jessye Norman, and Yvonne Minton, is a stunning piece. In the accents of Berlioz's Dido but with more intricate emotions of grief, guilt, self-reproach, and wounded pride, the queen surveys her career and prepares to die nobly. At the Philadelphia concert, Miss Norman was the Cleopatra—regal, passionate, dignified, and poignant.

SIMPLE superlatives can praise the concerts of the next three days, given by the Vienna Philharmonic, conducted by Leonard Bernstein. They offered the finest performances of Viennese symphonies I have heard in many, many years. They were concerts on the highest level one can hope to hear today. The programs were Haydn's Eighty-eighth and the Eroica; Mozart's late G-Minor and Mahler's Fourth; the Jupiter and Brahms' Second. Although they came at the close of a seventeen-day, thirteen-concert American tour, there was no hint of fatigue or routine but, rather, a sense that orchestra and conductor were inspired to give the most profound and most beautiful performances of each work which they had ever given. In a dozen years here, I'd not heard orchestral playing at once so beautiful and so natural. The Berlin Philharmonic under Karajan has been sleeker and more patently amazing, and the Chicago Symphony under Solti has been louder and more brilliantly precise, but in their playing there was an element of display—apt



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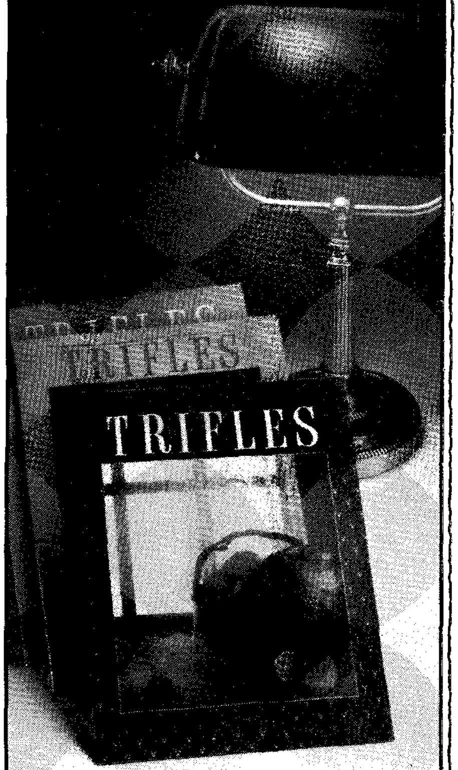

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to some scores, not to the Viennese classics—quite absent in the Vienna orchestra's performances. The Beethoven cycle that the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Bernard Haitink gave in Carnegie six years ago had much of this quality but not the extraordinary match of orchestral timbre and orchestral style to the works in question. Carnegie's February program book included an interview with Mr. Bernstein in which he expressed impatience with the notion of a particular conductor's or a particular orchestra's "sound": "I don't believe in *my* sound, or *Ormandy's* sound, or the *Chicago* sound, or the *Philadelphia* sound." And:

> I'm not interested in having an orchestra sound like *itself.* I want it to sound like the composer. That was my greatest pride with the New York Philharmonic—that they could switch on a dime, from Haydn, to Ravel, to Stravinsky, to Brahms, and it would always be stylistically right.

But earlier in the interview he suggested reasons, technical and "not just mystical," that the orchestra of "the city of Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart, Haydn, and Mahler" should play their music more satisfyingly than any other orchestra does:

> There's something about the tradition and the homogeneousness of that orchestra that makes a difference. The instruments in the string section are all matched, and the players all come from the same school—their grandparents played the same instruments in that orchestra.

Karajan to some extent internationalized the Berlin Philharmonic and turned it into the world's supreme virtuoso orchestra, adding suppleness to its solidity while maintaining the long, deep, firmly supported "breath"—of strings as well as wind—that has ever been its glory. The Vienna Philharmonic has been less colored by the introduction of foreign virtuosos with their different techniques and differently constructed instruments; its brass and its woodwinds sound different from those of other orchestras—especially the horns and the oboes. The blend, the cohesiveness, the absence of bite remain distinctively Viennese: the woodwinds are less keen and the brasses broader (and the tuba was rather too loose and plump of tone for my taste). The orchestra might not be able to switch on a dime from Brahms to Stravinsky, or perform, let's say, Elliott Carter's Symphony of Three Orchestras as well as the New York Philharmonic under Pierre Boulez did. (Maybe it could: in that interview, Bernstein claims that "with

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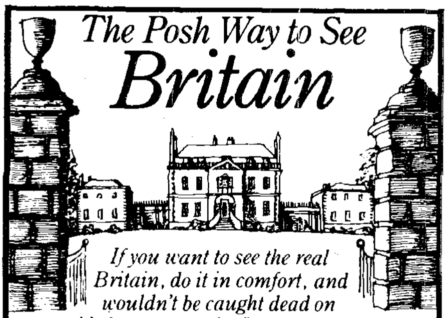

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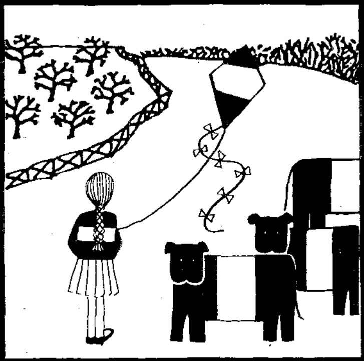

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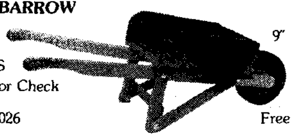

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enough rehearsal, yes, one can make any great orchestra homogeneous in terms of whatever composer one is conducting.") I'm not sure that I'd want it as my only orchestra; after a week or so in Vienna I start to get itchy, find musical euphoria turning to restlessness, and feel that the place remains the complacent city that missed the point of Mozart, Schubert, Mahler, Schoenberg while they lived there. But its very conservatism, coupled with its wholehearted, if belated, devotion to past greatness, brings rewards; and these three days of concerts devoted to great music that lies at the center of Western civilization inspired nothing but gratitude and euphoria.

Mr. Bernstein has always been a conductor loving and giving. Sometimes in the past, he has been overenthusiastic and overemotional, wearing Mahler's, even Brahms', heart on his sleeve, drawing out sentiment or whipping up excitement in his players in an almost unseemly way. But he has matured into a classical conductor probably unrivalled today—as warm, alert, and communicative as ever, but wiser and more disciplined. Great conductors—Weingartner, Furtwängler, Klemperer, Hamilton Harty, Albert Coates, Benjamin Britten—have often been composers. Mr. Bernstein has, as they had, a composer's instinctive grasp of why scores take the turns they do. The Haydn and the Mozart G-Minor, done with reduced forces, were marvellously shapely; in the latter's Andante the sound of the Vienna strings and the loving way they laid entry upon entry brought tears of joy to listeners' eyes. The Jupiter, done with a large orchestra, was grand but not heavy. The Eroica was noble; Tovey's phrase for the *poco andante* return of the theme in the finale, "like the opening of the gates of Paradise," was heard to be true. The performances were uneccentric. They were simply *right*. Just so should the horns sound the warm ray that lights the path into Brahms' D-Major Symphony. Just so—with no more passionate intensity, for that would throw the movement off balance, but with no less—should the cellos play the *espressivo* melody at the start of the Adagio. Five of the six performances were confirmatory—fresh, joy-giving revelations of known glory, executed with energy, delight, beauty of sound and of phrasing, and an uncanny accord between conductor and players. Mahler's Fourth was more surprising. It has always been regarded as the sunniest,

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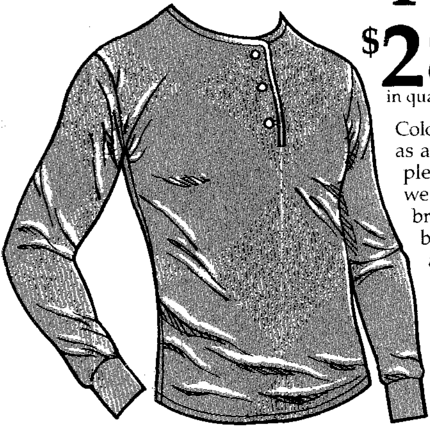

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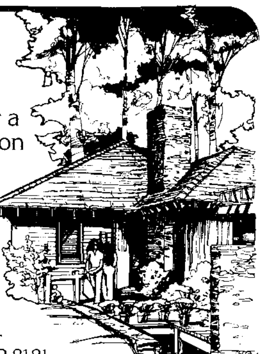

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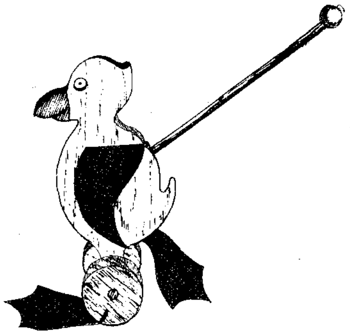

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the least troubled, of his symphonies. Mr. Bernstein, largely by means of tempo transitions a shade less than easeful, of some stabbing accents and plangent timbres, made it a more disturbing work than usual. One recalled Mahler's observation "Occasionally it darkens and becomes phantasmagorical and terrifying: not that the sky becomes overcast, for the sun continues to shine eternally, but that one suddenly takes fright; just as on the most beautiful day in a sunlit forest one can be seized with terror or panic." Mahler also said that when for reasons of musical logic he decided to alter a certain passage he found himself, to his amazement, transported from flowery Elysian Fields to the icy gloom of Tartarus. Charm was not missing in Mr. Bernstein's performance. It seemed to compass—and to reconcile, memorably—both what Bruno Walter, smiling, and Klemperer, brooding, had discovered in the piece. A correspondent in the February issue of *Gramophone* asks "would it not be an interesting experiment to use a boy soprano" as soloist in the finale? Mr. Bernstein thought so, too, and in this performance he used a treble, young Alan Bergius, from the Tölz Boys Choir. (Master Bergius sings treble solos in the Telefunken series of Bach cantatas, and Amor in a recording of Gluck's "Orfeo" with Peter Hofmann as Orpheus.) As the last movement began, he rose up behind the orchestra, rather like Gottfried at the end of "Lohengrin." He sang attractively, and Mr. Bernstein observed the Note to the Conductor set at the head of the finale: "It is of the highest importance that the singer should be accompanied with the *utmost* discretion." (Mahler uses the feminine form, "*Sängerin*;" there is no evidence that he himself ever thought of a boy's voice here.) Mr. Bernstein said in that interview, "With a soprano, you don't get the low notes, and with a mezzo, you don't get the head tones. The only way you can get all of that is by using a boy." But this boy, at any rate from his station at the back of the platform, did not carry strongly enough. The delicate orchestral playing bore out the composer's declaration that the chief influence on his scoring in this symphony was that of Verdi. Mahler had conducted the Hamburg première of "Falstaff," in 1894.

Karajan—in Helena Matheopoulos's fascinating book "Maestro" (Harper & Row)—says that a reason for the

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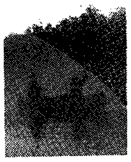

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Berlin Philharmonic's and the Vienna Philharmonic's greatness is "that they give you what you want, but they also give you something more," and talks of rehearsing with an orchestra until "they carry *you* instead of you carrying them." Mr. Celibidache, for all his rehearsals, seemed not to have reached this point, and still to be, in Karajan's phrase, "conducting not music but notes and bar lines." In the three Vienna concerts, composers, conductor, and orchestra made one inseparable music.

ON Monday last week, WQXR broadcast a taped Boston Symphony concert including a performance of the Mahler Fourth, conducted by Seiji Ozawa, with Frederica von Stade, mezzo and soprano in one, as the soloist. It proved nothing, however, for Mr. Ozawa's account of the symphony was trivial, meaningless.

Earlier that evening, the orchestra and Mr. Ozawa had appeared in Carnegie Hall. The concert began with Mozart's "Idomeneo" overture, in a performance that was firmly and pleasingly fashioned. But it's not really an effective concert piece: beginning boldly in D major, it ends in—or, rather, shades off into—a D major not tonic but dominant to the G minor of Ilia's opening aria. Then Maurizio Pollini played Schoenberg's Piano Concerto—a problematic work, an early (1942) example, perhaps, of the "New Romanticism." Neither Alfred Brendel (in the Deutsche Grammophon recording) nor Mr. Pollini seems to me to play it quite freely or lyrically enough. Schoenberg himself, in his essay "Heart and Brain in Music," cites the opening of the concerto as a melody in whose shaping "something like a human heart" was active. I've yet to hear it sound like the lilting waltz it is surely meant to be. The concert ended with Strauss's Symphonia Domestica, an orchestral showpiece that, despite some distinguished individual solo passages, showed the orchestra as a whole to be a rather strident, noisy, ill-blended band in climaxes. Although Mr. Ozawa is an efficient conductor, he often strikes me as a curiously empty one.

—ANDREW PORTER

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DEPT. OF STRAIGHT THINKING

[*Sonja Hillgren in the Boston Globe*]

The task force said it looked at hunger as a social problem in which some people cannot obtain adequate amounts of food.

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BOOKS

From Fragments a World Perfect at Last

WHEN Czeslaw Milosz was named the Nobel Prize winner in literature in 1980, the consequent wave of publicity made almost everything about Milosz—everything except his poems—become better known. The Nobel Lecture was reprinted in *The New York Review of Books;* Milosz's prose volumes—"The Captive Mind" (1953), "Native Realm" (1968), and "Emperor of the Earth" (essays collected in 1977)—were all reprinted in paperback; and an early novel, "The Issa Valley," was published in English translation for the first time. Even the "Selected Poems" (published in English by the Seabury Press in 1973 and revised, by Ecco, in 1980) have been, in the wake of the Nobel, reviewed less as poems than as the work of a thinker and political figure; the poems tend to be considered en masse, in relation either to the condition of Poland, or to the suppression of dissident literature under Communist rule, or to the larger topic of European intellectual history. Now Ecco has issued a spectacular new collection, "The Separate Notebooks," translated by Robert Hass and Robert Pinsky, with Milosz and Renata Gorczynski. The volume contains poems written as early as 1934 and as late as 1980. Its appearance offers an occasion for a consideration of Milosz's work as a modern poet.

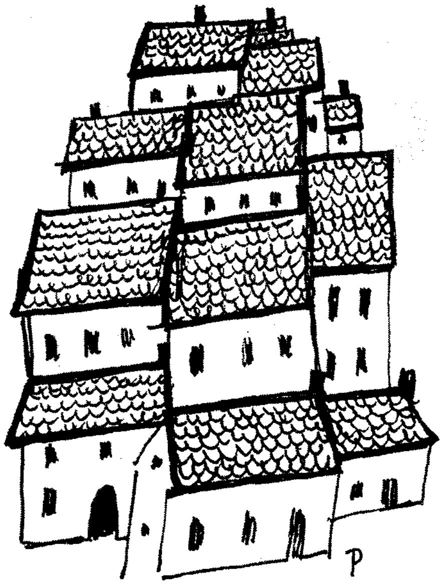
Like most others writing about Milosz's verse, I know no Polish. But he has been unusually well translated (in part by himself) and has collaborated with his translators. And as he himself has said, in the introduction to an anthology of postwar Polish poetry, he and other modern Polish poets have adopted a form of free verse relatively adaptable to English, unlike traditional, accentual-syllabic Polish metres. At least some aspects of Milosz's poetry do seem to be translatable; it is a poetry that even in English both disturbs and satisfies, with a mordant irony and a classical grandeur vying in it for dominance.

What has it lost in translation? Stanislaw Baranczak, a young Polish poet now teaching at Harvard, says (in an article in *Parnassus*) that Milosz not only uses a polyphony of voices but is also as willing to use a "low" word as a "high" one, and "tries to find the most concrete of all possible synonyms." "He wants a language," says Baranczak, "open to every way of speaking, every recess of vocabulary, every possible style." Apparently, there takes place frequently in Milosz's poetry that rise in temperature which comes when two words that have never before lived side by side suddenly mingle—provoking what we feel in English when we read of Marvell's "green thought," Traherne's "orient and immortal wheat," Donne's "unruly Sun," or Keats' "sylvan historian." This breaking down of "natural" compartments is one of the most powerful effects of poetry, which by its concision and free play can represent better than most prose the fluid access of a daring and unhampered mind to its own several regions. Such linguistic versatility—combining words that have never been combined before, but doing it with a sublime justice and propriety, so that the effect is not a jolt but a confirmation of rightness—gives perhaps the highest pleasure that poetry exists to confer. But in reading Milosz we are barred, as foreigners, from knowing that pure bliss of the newly created linguistic object as a reader of the mother tongue knows it. We are also barred from hearing the indispensable falls of sound and cadence.

If we cannot hear Milosz's native euphonies, and if we miss many of the surprising and (we are told) immensely touching effects of his diction as he searches into long-forgotten or darkened corners of the Polish past and brings them, by a word, into an alignment with the present, what can we bear away from a reading of the poems? We find in them, first of all, a truncated autobiography (to be read against the autobiographical essays of "Native Realm"). The poetic autobiographer, like the prose one, is reticent: Milosz says in "Native Realm," "The passing over of certain periods important for oneself, but requiring too personal an explanation, will be a token of respect for those undergrounds that exist in all of us and that are better left in peace." He is not a "confessional" poet; his voice is, one might say, disinterestedly personal. For Milosz, the person is irrevocably a person in history, and the interchange between external event and the individual life is the matrix of poetry. Like most lyric poets, Milosz was probably not by nature very much a social being, but, given the situation of his life, he cannot help being a historical one. There is an eerie solitude in Milosz; it sometimes seems that he has suffered the twentieth century all alone, vividly aware of historical cataclysms—those he saw in person (the war, the Nazi occupation of Warsaw, the subsequent Russian occupation, and Communist rule in Poland) and those of Europe in general—yet living in catastrophe as a hermit, sounding like Blake's Mental Traveller:

> I travel'd thro' a Land of Men,
> A Land of Men and Women too,
> And heard & saw such dreadful things
> As cold Earth wanderers never knew.

There are two convictions, both of them mentioned in Milosz's introduction to "Native Realm," that are important for his poems. The first is that "one can get at man only obliquely, only through the constant masquerade that is the extension of himself at a given moment, through his historical existence." All of Milosz's poetry has, even if sometimes unwillingly, this historical grounding: through circumstance humanity is made visible. At the same time, it is the second conviction that seems to me the more important in isolating Milosz's idiosyncrasy as a poet: he says that if the "chaotic richness" of "the particulars of our fate" did not exist "we would not constantly be aspiring to form achieved by a process of elimination." Milosz offers this as an axiom, and for him it is: form is the achievement, by the poet, of a paring away, of a refinement of original multiplicity into elemental leanness. But this is not so for



"When I get out of here in 2013, I certainly hope I will have learned my lesson."

• •

all poets; there are the poets of putting in, as we may call them (with Spenser our preëminent example), as well as the poets of taking out. Milosz is a stern poet; forbidding and austere lines appear in most of the poems. But they rarely occur alone; they are accompanied by a relenting, a thawing mildness. And it is in this peculiar balance between a juridical, frowning severity and a lyrical, melting attachment that Milosz's power to unsettle us lies. Of course, there are other characteristic aspects of his writing; the one most often remarked on is a gift for classical aphorisms. The aphoristic, or gnomic, sentence offers a linguistic form for Milosz's historical irony—an irony that sees, by virtue of historical length and breadth, beyond the individual case, even if that case is one's own. Poets with a tendency to universalize become (at their worst) deprived of an individual voice; poets who forget that their own fate is part of the common lot fall into self-pity. Milosz's grimness has not blunted the antennae of his painful sensibility; and, conversely, his own exposed nerves have not fatally distracted him from the historical events he has recorded almost involuntarily.

Milosz is more intellectually conscious of his own aesthetic than many poets are. He says, for example:

> Particular existence keeps us from the light
> (That sentence can be read in reverse as well).

The struggle between a clarifying, if inhuman, light and the darkness of particular fate underlies everything that he writes, and provides, in fact, an endlessly fertile resource for invention, as particulars and light dispute each other for room in his work.

From the start, Milosz was a natural ecstatic, destined for intense and radiant perception. (One of the aphorisms reads, "From childhood till old age ecstasy at sunrise.") But everything in his life after his childhood was a scourging of his natural temper. Contradiction afflicted him young, forcing his gaze onto war, death, the murder of the Jews, and the moral impossibility of life in devastated cities, where one stole and cheated and lied to live; later he was to know the betrayals of truth and of old loyalties under the Communist regime:

> Since I opened my eyes I have seen only the glow of fires, massacres,
> Only injustice, humiliation, and the laughable shame of braggarts.

This is the fate of "The Poor Poet," in the "Selected Poems." But the poet's life had begun differently:

> The first movement is singing,
> A free voice, filling mountains and valleys.
> The first movement is joy,
> But it is taken away.

The second stanza continues:

> And now that the years have transformed my blood
> And thousands of planetary systems have been born and died in my flesh,
> I sit, a sly and angry poet
> With malevolently squinted eyes,
> And, weighing a pen in my hand,
> I plot revenge.

Not every poet is temperamentally created for joy, and not all those who are so created are so early blighted—or, if they are, it is by a personal blight rather than the universal ones of war and occupation by a foreign power. Milosz reads like a soul who has received a wound from which he has never recovered: an air of doom now hangs over every moment of joy, so that the simplest happiness appears always as a reprieve or furlough from an evil sure to reassert itself. The precariousness of life and writing is always felt in Milosz; his contemporaries who died or were killed or were silenced (not only in Poland but in all of Europe) contribute to the voice he has become—a voice almost necessarily that of a generation rather than (or as well as) that of a single man. The "I" who speaks many of the poems speaks for all who witnessed the dissolution of Europe:

> I did not expect to live in such an unusual moment.
> When the God of thunders and of rocky heights,
> the Lord of Hosts, Kyrios Sabaoth,
> would humble people to the quick,
> allowing them to act whatever way they wished,
> leaving to them conclusions, saying nothing. . . .
> Dispossessed of its objects, space was swarming.
> Everywhere was nowhere and nowhere, everywhere.
> Letters in books turned silver-pale, wobbled and faded.
> The hand was not able to trace the palm sign, the river sign, or the sign of ibis.

The dispassionate tone of this poem,

called "Oeconomia Divina" (the pious phrase is used with a savage lack of comment), is in itself both a manifestation of horror and a dissembling of it. Milosz finds transparently simple ways of expressing the evaporation of materiality and spirituality alike. As bombs render one's native streets unrecognizable, and as all codes of ethics fall at once, space swarms and letters flicker and vanish: Milosz's free pillaging of all historical eras opens out his canvas. It is only by such an oblique treatment of the destruction of Warsaw that Milosz succeeds in treating it at all.

As Baranczak points out, Milosz rejects symbols in favor of metonymy and synecdoche, those figures of speech which represent a whole by a thing allied to it or by a part of it. The originality with which Milosz finds the briefest of words for inner events is one of the reasons to read him. "The years have transformed my blood," he says, "and thousands of planetary systems have been born and died in my flesh." As in the best poets, we feel this account to be not figurative at all but the most literally truthful way of saying what has happened. What is this changing set of interplanetary relations but a concise history of a Polish intellectual's inner life from the forties to the sixties? The sort of change Milosz wants to describe can only, for him, be described in those terms usually reserved for the life and death of immensely long cycles; what we gain from his language is a sense of indecent speeding up, as one inner galaxy after another is conceived, brought to being, and annihilated.

His own compulsion to write sometimes drives Milosz to bitterness and anger. "The Poor Poet" continues, for example:

> I poise the pen and it puts forth
> twigs and leaves, it is covered
> with blossoms.
> And the scent of that tree is impudent, for there, on the real earth,
> Such trees do not grow, and like an
> insult
> To suffering humanity is the scent
> of that tree.

He finds himself condemned to "odious rhythmic speech/Which grooms itself and, of its own accord, moves on." If such passages testify to the guilt of the survivor, they testify as well to the tormenting distance every poet feels between the miraculous Aaron's rod of art and this world "where men sit and hear each other groan."

Milosz's poems, with a few exceptions, were not given dates in the "Selected Poems," and we cannot be sure from this fragmentary evidence of a life's work (supplemented by "Bells in Winter," mostly later poems, published by Ecco in 1978, and by the poems in "The Separate Notebooks") how his speculations on his art have changed during his writing life. But the notion that art's perpetual fragrance is "impudent" and an "insult" to mortal suffering is not the only view that Milosz takes. In the surpassingly beautiful "The World: A Naïve Poem," a sequence of twenty poems written in 1943, Milosz renders a past of depth and profound feeling in the simplest measures and the simplest words available to a poet, as though only the first syllables of the mother tongue could be words deep-rooted enough for the deepest of primal experiences. "The World" is the most opalescent of Milosz's sequences; it exists as pure light against a background of abysmal darkness, preserving that doubleness of perspective—extreme joy recalled in extreme despair—which is Milosz's unique discovery in the art of poetry.

Much of the "naïveté" of the sequence can be seen in the titles of individual poems: "The Path," "The Gate," "The Porch," "The Dining-room," "The Stairs." These are the elements of the child's precious and irrecoverable visual past. In this space we see the godlike parents. "Father in the Library" revives the little boy full of reverence for the father empowered by mysterious words:

> A high forehead, and tousled hair;
> The sun at the window pouring
> light—
> Father wears a crest of downy fire
> As he opens, slowly, the great book.
>
> His gown covered with devices
> Like a wizard's, he murmurs spells:
> Only one whom God has taught
> magic
> Could know the marvels his book
> reveals.

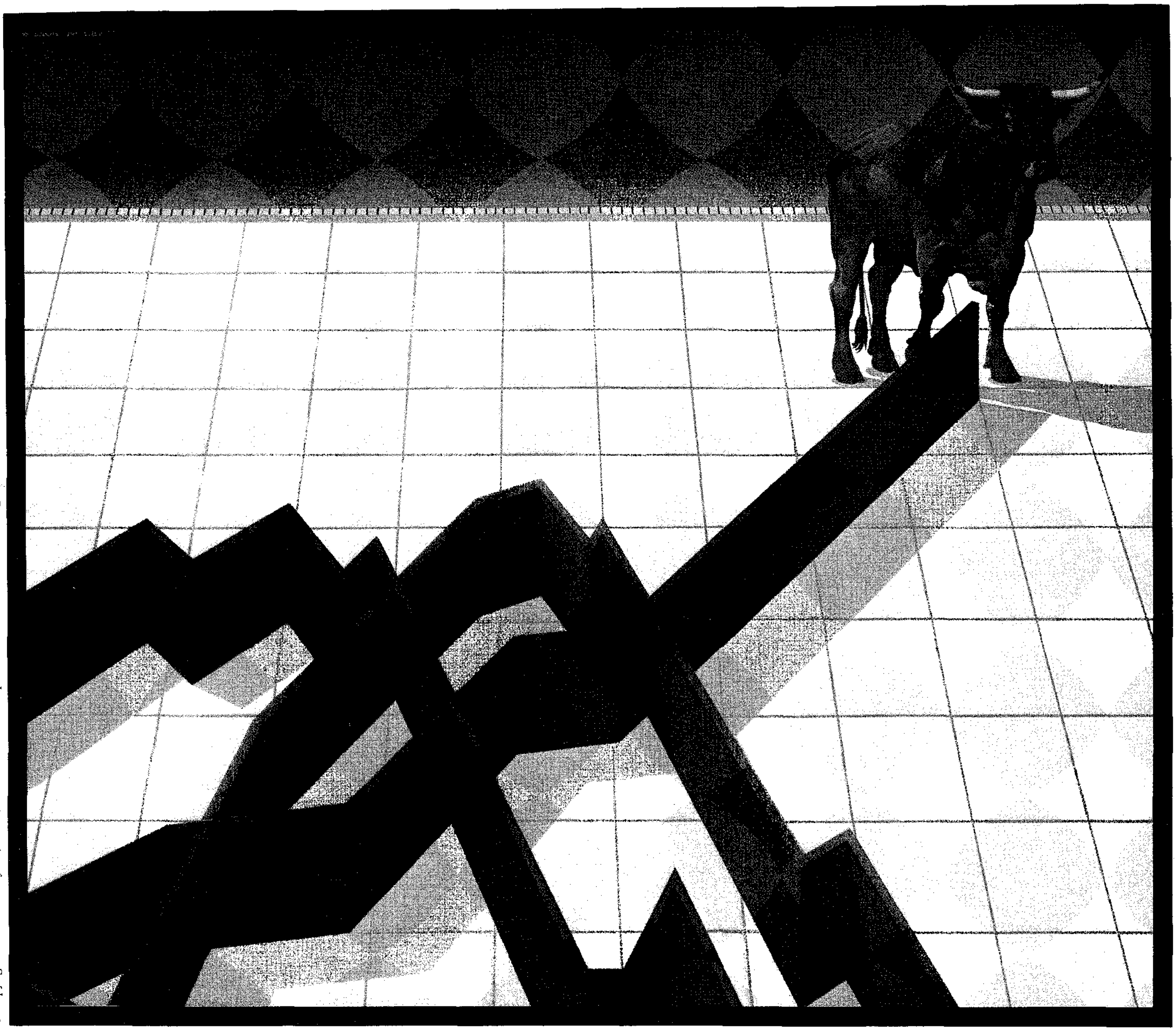
That is the entire poem, left without adult comment as a testimony to the child's spellbound realization of adult power in the word. All of "The World" is written in primer style. It is a style in which, one feels, it is impossible to lie, or even to shade the truth. Blake, one of Milosz's masters, knew this when he wrote his songs.

In "The World," the sweetness of Milosz's recollection passes from the visual and the personal to the religious, with three childlike poems on the three highest, or "theological," virtues—faith, hope, and love—which make up the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth poems of the sequence. After that, the child goes abroad to the forest and sees the skies, the kingdom of the birds, who live in a "free, high, shining place;" here he first grasps the possibility of far voyaging. In the single frightening poem, the child becomes Blake's little boy lost in the forest, but, as in Blake, he is found by his ever-watchful and kind father. The security and beauty of the world as it should be, and as we all feel it could be if it were governed by faith, hope, and love, is the theme of the father's rescue of the trembling child. This poem, the most radiant and sacred of the sequence, is called "Recovery;" it must be remembered that it was written in the devastated landscape of Warsaw in 1943. The father speaks:

> "Here I am—why this senseless
> fear?
> Soon now the day will come, and
> night will fade.
> Listen: you can hear the shepherd's
> horns, and there,
> Look how the stars pale, over a
> trace of red.
>
> The path is straight, we're almost to
> the clearing.
> Down in the village, the first bell
> chimes,
> And roosters on fences have started
> crowing.
> The sleepy earth, fertile and happy,
> steams.
>
> Here it is still dark, and you see fog
> pour
> In black swirls over the huckleberry
> knolls.
> But dawn on bright stilts wades in
> from the shore,
> And the ball of sun is ringing as it
> rolls."

To imagine this steady parental reassurance in the most simple and fundamental words of the mother tongue, in the metres immemorially present in hymn and nursery rhyme, is to remind oneself of what this father's voice must sound like in its original Polish, as it embodies the oldest dream of all, underlying our most primitive infant memories—that the universe is, as Carlyle said, not a charnel house but godlike, and our father's. Since this dream is the mythical projection of a faith in being, of a hope for reality, and of a reciprocal love, the poem stands firmly as an essay in archetypal forms, as a predication of the deepest values, and as an anguished personal memory of an incinerated culture.

Read in the original, this great hymn of commemoration must be a



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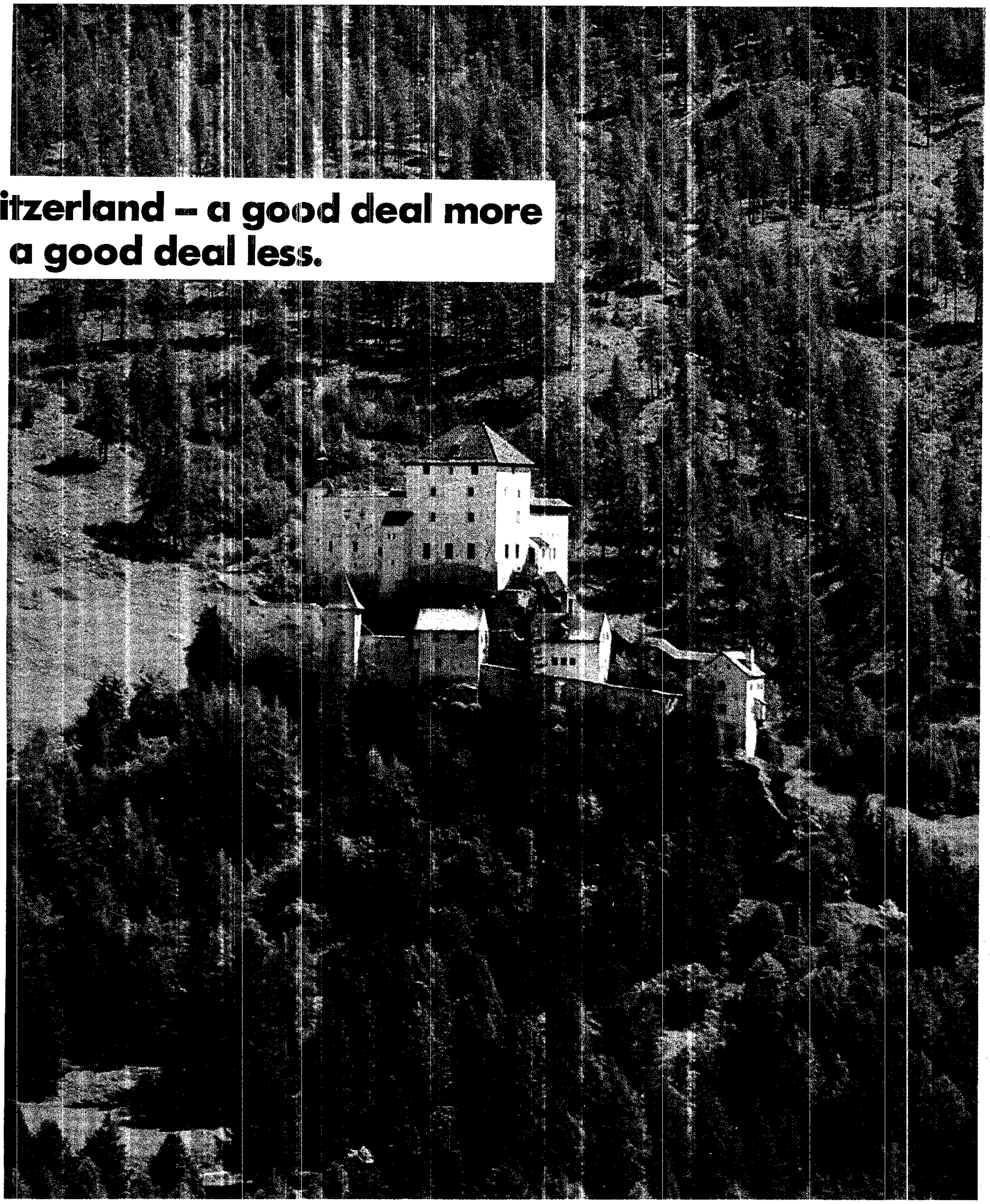

Took an early morning stroll through the Old Town. Market day. Everything lovingly displayed on wooden racks. Was lured across the way to a confectionary. Bought a quarter pound of chocolate: $1.10. Worth it. To eat or give away? Both. Naturally, it is from the shop's own recipe and almost as venerable as the castle yesterday.

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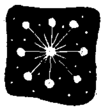
stab to the heart of any Pole. It is "warm, in the way some pictures look warm" (as Keats said he wanted his autumn ode to be). Perhaps "The World" could have been written in this transparently simple way (for all its concreteness, it is a heavenly version of the earth) only by someone steely enough to pass rapidly beyond the anger, horror, hysteria, and denial felt as a childhood world is being lost. He creates instead this crystalline pendant world on a golden chain, preserved in a child's gaze.

It is clear from his three volumes that Milosz has a powerful inner investment in antagonism. In his poetry, cultures are set in opposition; world views clash; existence struggles with annihilation; learning vanquishes, and is vanquished by, ignorance; laughter and weeping succeed each other; contempt vies with grief. Milosz is not a writer of one chief emotion (as we might think of Blake as chiefly a poet of indignant vision, or of Crane as supremely a poet of Platonic longing). It seems sometimes that Milosz's poems should split open from the sheer internal pressure of their confined contents. What is confined is often at the same time both mysterious and intelligible, if hard to acknowledge. The sequence "Album of Dreams" is a striking group exhibiting this pressure. The dreams retold are dated, as if to give them the force of testimony:

NOVEMBER 23

A long train is standing in the station and the platform is empty.
Winter, night, the frozen sky is flooded with red.
Only a woman's weeping is heard. She is pleading for something
from an officer in a stone coat.

In this brief glimpse, there is both a general emptiness of landscape and a fullness in the tableau of suppliant and officer; there is both purpose (the long train) and negation of intent (the empty platform); there is darkness and yet a suffusion of blood suggested in the red sky; there is the original, silent scene and the shocking intrusion of weeping and pleading; there is the abject humiliation of the woman and the adamant implacability of the stony officer. Such antagonisms are sensually, aesthetically, ethically, and intellectually unbearable. A more sentimental poet might have represented the hopeless woman and the inhuman officer as a tableau of social protest, but in Milosz's dream logic the woman and the officer represent, philosophically speaking, the irresistible force and the immovable object, and it is that conjunction (philosophically inconceivable) which the aesthetic of the poem must mirror, and does, in its irreconcilable items of presence and absence, reality and surrealism, flesh and stone, silence and the sound of agony. In little, this is the pattern of the best of Milosz's work. To read it is to feel that one's interior being will crack from incorporating such incompatible pressures.



A strong-minded poet of this sort risks an almost vicious power if he permits one force-field to dominate, unmitigated by another; and Milosz's poems of lethal scorn, though memorable, sin perhaps in allowing no shelter from their commination. In "Child of Europe," those who saved their own skins at the expense of the weak speak in their own voice (though, of course, they would not openly speak in this way). "We," they say, "are better than those who perished. . . . We, saved by our own cunning and knowledge." The poem continues:

Having the choice of our own death and that of a friend,
We chose his, coldly thinking: let it be done quickly.

We sealed gas chamber doors, stole bread,
Knowing the next day would be harder to bear than the day before.

As befits human beings, we explored good and evil.
Our malignant wisdom has no like on this planet.

It may be that Milosz includes himself in his sardonic lines; he speaks in another poem of his "debts never paid," his "shames," his "base deeds to be forgiven." The withering sketch of a political conformist ("Keeping one hand on Marx's writings, he reads the Bible in private") is, after all, drawn by one who rose to diplomatic service in postwar Poland, serving in Washington and Paris before he finally broke with the regime, in 1951. Milosz's conviction of evil in himself breaks intermittently through these poems: "What comes from my evil—that only is true . . ." "Pain raved in me with a diabolic tongue." A gnostic distrust renders every element of virtue suspect: devils, he says, "whistle songs/ . . . about the moment of our agony/ When everything we have cherished will appear/ an artifice of cunning self-love."

Under the rubric of "everything we have cherished" can come language, poetry, freedom, intellectual integrity—everything for which Milosz could tell himself he chose political exile. But linguistic exile is for a poet a form of suicide—no matter that there is a community of exiles, no matter that underground writings from Poland can be obtained, no matter that one's language is in its fully formed adult state when one leaves the linguistic home. Although Milosz has said that "no clear-cut division between the poets living abroad and those at home is apparent in Polish literature . . . their present residence is not a decisive factor," only Polish literary history will be able to judge whether Milosz's later poetry has suffered from his living abroad. (The most interesting twentieth-century case of linguistic exile is, of course, that of Joyce, and the question to be asked is whether his attempt to make a polyglot language in "Finnegans Wake" is not a result of that exile; the comparable lyric case is that of Eliot, where the mask of Englishness may have debilitated the Quartets.) Milosz is now Professor Emeritus of Slavic Languages and Literatures at Berkeley. He has published a "History of Polish Literature" and an anthology of postwar Polish poetry; and yet, he laments, the names he recites are "not known to anyone"—"Chiaromonte/ Miomandre/ Petőfi/ Mickiewicz. . . . Young generations are not interested in what happened/ Somewhere else, long ago."

In constituting himself the abstract chronicle of a dead Europe, Milosz has chosen a method as different as possible from Pound's. Pound's jumble of detail (American as well as European) is presented by an excavator-poet, who finds a quotation, an ideogram, a letter, a broken fortress, a bit of a diary, a fleeting goddess, a set of ruined visual equivalents of the past. Pound's archeological museum, increasingly, has no place in itself for sentences; the diffraction of time permits only glancing syntactic fragments, phrases scattered across the page. "I cannot make it cohere" was Pound's own statement about his mound of potsherds. "Reality" in Pound's aesthetic (at least, as testified to by the form of the "Cantos") consists of infinitely subdivisible matter, as buildings fall to stone, treatises to ideograms, and literary works to snatches of themselves; the reconstruction of the past is a labor of Sisyphus. Milosz's aesthetic refutes such a judg-

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ment; what is important about the past, he insists, is its ontological simplicity, the utter beauty of its traditional parts:

> Now he sees his homeland. At
>   the time of the second
>   mowing.
> Roads winding uphill and down.
>   Pine groves. Lakes.
> An overcast sky with one
>   slanting ray.
> And everywhere men with
>   scythes, in shirts of
>   unbleached linen
> And the dark-blue trousers that
>   were common in the province.

This material is inherently nostalgic, of course, but one suspects that the reason Pound could not write like this about the wreckage of Europe is that he was not European; he had absorbed his Europe as a reader of books rather than as an inhabitant of a settled place. European detail, and even American historical detail, seemed exotica to the enthusiastic provincial American. For Milosz, who has the past in his bones (not only from his childhood in prewar rural Lithuania but from his early study of Latin), all the detail of the life in Christian Rome's farthest province goes without saying and need not be specified; it need only be remembered:

> Riding in a cart, he looked back
>   to retain as much as possible.
> Which means he knew what was
>   needed for some ultimate
>   moment
> When he would compose from
>   fragments a world perfect at
>   last.

It is that "world perfect at last" which Milosz preserves in "The World."

Milosz's later poems—those collected in "Bells in Winter" and "The Separate Notebooks"—incorporate long ruminations on self, body, language, the past, good and evil. They can seem less pure and less corrosive than the earlier poems, though any true comparative judgment could be made only by a Polish-speaking reader. Milosz's dark spirit of mockery lives in them side by side with his racked religious yearning. His gibes and his prayers vie with each other for room, his macabre visual caprices coexisting with his ineffable simplicity of recollection. It is almost impossible to convey the turbulence of mind produced in a reader by such a succession of mental and visual leaps; that turbulence is the aesthetic on which Milosz stakes his claim. In one representative passage, for example, Milosz remembers the old woman, Lisabeth, who was the servant in the house where he

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rented a room when he was a university student long ago. He remembers, as if it were today (and this is his simplicity), her going to morning Mass to the sound of bells in winter:

> I could count the years. But I prefer not to.
> What are years, if I see the snow and her shoes
> Funny, pointed, buttoned on the side,
> And I am the same, though the pride of the flesh
> Has its beginning and end.

Just as we are taken by both the photographic detail of the remembered shoes and the prophetic, Biblical tone remarking on the corruptibility of the flesh, Milosz's demonic mockery rises to remind us that the mind of a worldly older man is composed not only of piety and recollection. He describes the service in the baroque church, with the bowing priest in his vestments:

> Pudgy angels are blowing their trumpets again.
> And him, the stooped priest in his chasuble
> I would compare today to a scarab
> From the Egyptian division of the Louvre.

In this coldness, the poem recedes light-years from the "funny, pointed" shoes. There follows the most bizarre passage in the poem, one describing the "communion of saints"—the group of all those who have been saved by having lived a virtuous life. Church, state, and men—all are incriminated in Milosz's black redefinition of "sainthood":

> Our sister Lisabeth in the communion of saints—
> Of witches ducked and broken on the wheel
> Under the image of the cloud-enfolded Trinity
> Until they confess that they turn into magpies at night;
> Of wenches used for their masters' pleasure;
> Of wives who received a letter of divorce;
> Of mothers with a package under a prison wall—
> Follows the letters with her black fingernail,
> When the choirmaster, a sacrificer, a Levite
> Ascending the stairs, sings:
> *Introibo ad altare Dei.*
> *Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam.*
>
> *Prie Dievo kurs linksmina mano jaunystė.*
>
> *Mano jaunystės.*
> My youth.

This disturbing passage is one of those which strain with their burden of compressed meaning. Its vignettes are, first of all, visual—the buttoned shoes, the pudgy angels of traditional baroque ornament, the torture of witches (the ducking-pool, the wheel) taking place in the past under a medieval painting of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in glory. (The parallel with modern torture is made, with ironic savagery, in silence.) Secondly, the items of the poem are historically vertiginous, as Milosz conflates the witch trials of the seventeenth century, the feudal *droit de seigneur*, and the modern mother with a package for an imprisoned son. Thirdly, the range of the poem takes in the social hierarchy (the priest and the church, the prison and the state, the masters and the wenches). Fourth, and finally, the passage interweaves the Lithuanian mother tongue ("*mano jaunystė*"), the Latin of the poet's childhood role as an acolyte at Mass ("*juventutem meam*"), and the Polish "my youth," now translated into the English of exile. On the whole, the poem offers a succession of purely dissimilar language categories, as in the space of twenty lines we are made to say, in succession, the following improbable group of words: "buttoned," "pudgy," "chasuble," "scarab," "Egyptian," "Louvre," "saints," "witches," "ducked," "cloud," "Trinity," "magpies," "wenches," "divorce," "package," "fingernail," "Levite," "*Introibo*," "*Dievo*," "youth." (Only Lowell, among our contemporaries, embarked on a similar forcible yoking of linguistic realms.) The tones jar as noticeably against each other as do the words. The homage in the Latin beginning of the Mass is abraded by the sinister image of the scarab used for the priest, by the tortured women confessing to being magpies at night, and by the derisive epithets—"a sacrificer, a Levite"—applied to the celebrant of the Mass.

Milosz's elaborate inner system of grids is in one sense the common possession of any European intellectual—the grid of history, the grid of class structure, the grids of manifold visual experience, the grid of plural ethnic and religious allegiances. But in Milosz the grids are curiously permeable to each other, and the mobile flickering of language darts from one to the next, impelled by a rapid and nearly inhuman intelligence keeping a violent welter of feeling just barely in subjection. Milosz speaks both from within the Heraclitean flux and from above it. On the one hand, he is alive

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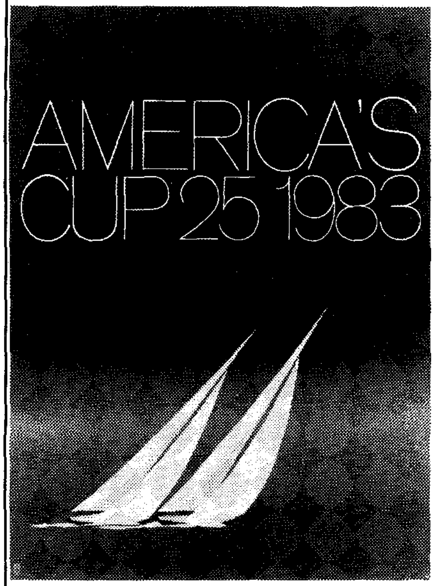

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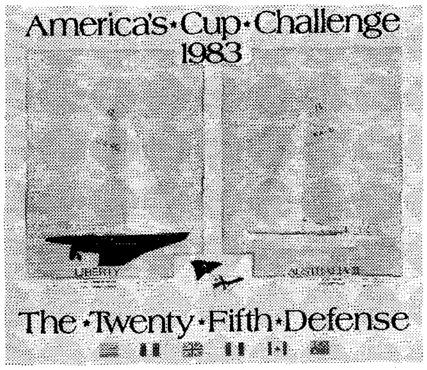

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in the now, writing about his life in Berkeley; on the other hand, he dwells in the past, and a posthumous voice arises from him as from the Delphic cleft. Finally, he is the voice of historical irony itself, visiting, aeons later, his remains in the indifferent museum of time:

> And the city stood in its
> brightness when years later I
> returned. . . .
> To my home in the display-
> case of a granite museum,
> Beside eyelash mascara,
> alabaster vials,
> And menstruation girdles of an
> Egyptian princess.
> There was only a sun forged
> out of gold plate,
> On darkening parquetry the
> creak of unhurried steps.

There are no direct lessons that American poets can learn from Milosz. Those who have never seen modern war on their own soil cannot adopt his tone; the sights that scarred his eyes cannot be seen by the children of a young provincial empire. A thousand years of history do not exist in American bones, and a culture secular from birth cannot feel the dissolution of the European religious synthesis, on which Milosz dwelt in "The Witness of Poetry," his recent Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard. But the work of Milosz reminds us of the great power that poetry gains from bearing within itself an unforced, natural, and long-ranging memory of past customs; a sense of the strata of ancient and modern history; wide visual experience; and a knowledge of many languages and literatures. Not, as in Pound, the self-conscious allusiveness of the autodidact, returning obsessively to the books of his formative years, but, rather, the living and tormented revoicing of the past makes Milosz a historical poet of bleak illumination. —HELEN VENDLER

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE HAUNTED MAJOR, by Robert Marshall, with a foreword by Henry Longhurst and illustrations by Harry Furniss (Scottish Academic Press/ Columbia; $12.50). This early-Edwardian minor classic, published in 1902 and never out of print, by an author otherwise quite forgotten, tells of Major the Honourable John William Wentworth Gore, a thirty-five-year-old gentleman of great athletic accomplishment and sublime self-esteem who rashly offers to play a crack golfer, Jim Lindsay, for the opportunity of proposing marriage to the American millionairess Katherine Clavering Gunter. The comic and dramatic potential of such a match was to be exploited, more than once, by P. G. Wodehouse, a generation later; here the contest is spiced by Major Gore's previous utter innocence of the game, and by the intercession of a Scots ghost, a pre-Reformation cardinal of St. Magnus (read: St. Andrew's), who has an uncanny posthumous way of swinging his old weird-shaped golf clubs. The beauty of the book resides in the writing: the portrait of pure conceit and snobbery that the first-person narrator draws while describing himself is a marvel of melodious irony, and the Scots accents that surround the game of golf rise up like clumps of gorse and thistle. The details of Jacky Gore's hapless lessons and of the epic match itself show knowledge of the sport both intimate and fond, and in the throes of his humbling the insufferable hero actually becomes—well, sufferable. An ideal evening's read for the winterbound golfer. The period illustrations by Harry Furniss help, too, though they are rather muddily reproduced.

UNTO THIS HOUR, by Tom Wicker (Viking; $19.95). It is hard to think of a better, more comprehensible account of the Second Battle of Manassas (or Bull Run) than Mr. Wicker spreads before us here. He insists in a postscript that his book is a work of fiction (not a contemporary hybrid "nonfiction novel"), but it is a novel solidly built on a solid understanding of the facts—of the maneuvering, the planning, the inspirations and the delusions, the skirmishings and the fighting that occupied from dawn to full dark those five hot August days in 1862 and gave the greatly outnumbered forces of Lee and Longstreet and Jackson their astonishing victory over Pope's Army of Virginia. Every detail of that battle is here, and every view and perspective—Confederate and Union, from above and below, panoramic and claustrophobic. Mr. Wicker's cast is one of literally hundreds. He follows closely the destinies of the aristocratic Confederate Captain Fargo Hart and the stern Vermont Yankee Captain Micah G. Duryea; of the Rebel General W. F. Hoke Arnall, of Jackson's corps, and his valiant wife, Amy, on the plantation down in North Carolina; of the poor white farmer Brace and his lovely daughter Missy; of a pair of homosexual lovers; of a New York reporter working to scoop the world; of an arrogant British observer; of the slaves Henry and Sajie. It is in many respects a good and gripping story. But it is also, for all its six hundred-odd pages, a rather thin one. There is more flash than depth in most of the characters, and the writing is often overidiomatic ("Josh Beasly was mad as a wet tomcat," "South Carolina boys could whip a cattywhompus barehanded"), often highfalutin ("derisive snicker of bullets," "sun . . . red as God's sleepless eye"), and even more often ready-made ("scalding tears," "clinched his jaw in bitter resolve"). And, perhaps fearful that we might forget the seriousness of battle, Mr. Wicker sees to it that most of the fictional characters in whom he has urged us to take a special interest are left dead or dying on the field. Endpaper and other maps.

A Late Divorce, by A. B. Yehoshua, translated from the Hebrew by Hillel Halkin (Doubleday; $16.95). Nine long days in the lives of nine long-winded narrators. Three live in Haifa, two in Tel Aviv, two in Jerusalem, and one in a suburban insane asylum. The ninth, the youngest one's grandfather, has been living for years in America. He spends the nine days circulating among the eight other narrators (all but one are his relatives) and negotiating his divorce from one of them. It is not easy to keep track of the nine as they squabble and brood—much less to care what they think or do. Mr. Yehoshua makes matters worse by giving much of the book over to extended interior monologues, which leave the reader wondering why only one narrator has been put away, and why only two are getting divorced.

Note: "At the Border," a novel by Robert Hemenway, has been published by Atheneum ($14.95). Much of the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker.*

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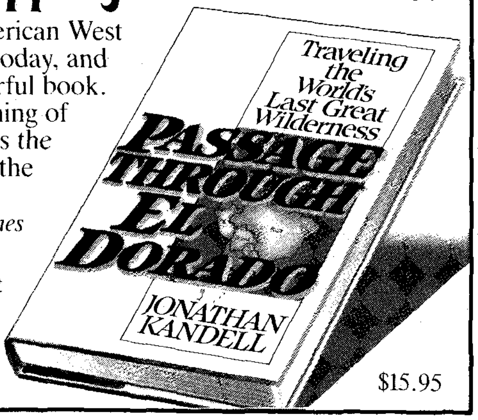
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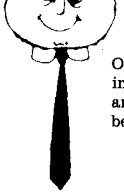

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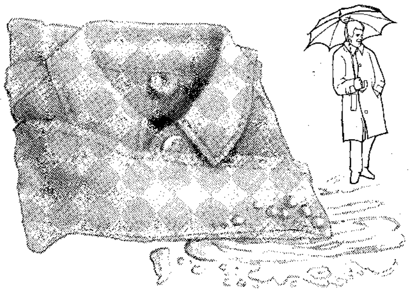

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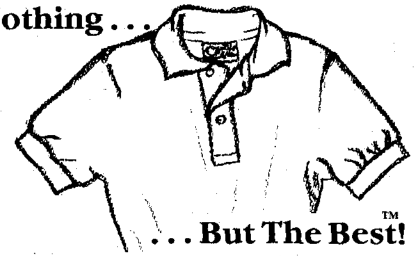

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the première of a documentary film about her, and exclaimed, "What a wonderful life I've had! A pity I didn't realize it sooner!" This first full biography in English takes us chronologically through that life, from her apprenticeship in writing under her first husband, the toadlike Willy, through her music-hall career, her love affairs and marriages, and her literary achievements. Colette was scarcely educated, and she did not regret it; she could, she once said, "live without Molière." Miss Richardson's biography is especially valuable for its appraisals of Colette's novels and short stories. It brings us close to Colette the human being—the lover of all things created. And it brings out, too, Colette's humility and modesty and her enduring self-doubts. Writing came hard to her, and she hated the struggle. Her third husband once said that she was "like a maker of musical instruments in the provinces, who, unknown to herself, made Stradivarius violins."

Tracking the Marvelous, by John Bernard Myers (Random House; $17.95). A memoir by a former art dealer, this is also a loose-jointed, gossipy history of the New York School of painting. Mr. Myers sought out and introduced many artists who have since become famous, among them Larry Rivers, Red Grooms, Fairfield Porter, Jane Freilicher, and Helen Frankenthaler; he was a friend of Mark Rothko and of Jackson Pollock and Lee Krasner. (His account of the dispute over the Rothko estate throws light on a very dark corner of the art world.) Mr. Myers is unpretentious about himself to a fault; one is tempted to say that he writes with a studied ingenuousness. But, for all that, he comes across in these pages as lively and attractive. Photographs.

Field Days, by Roger B. Swain (Scribners; $12.95). Roger Swain, the science editor of *Horticulture*, describes these essays as being about "the science of the familiar"—science applied to one's basement, one's back yard, and one's garden. They are that and much more. Mr. Swain cannot study anything—be it a hamburger or a cranberry—without finding something fresh, unexpected, and fascinating to say about it. In one of his essays he notes that he is the descendant of a restless New England sea captain, and that

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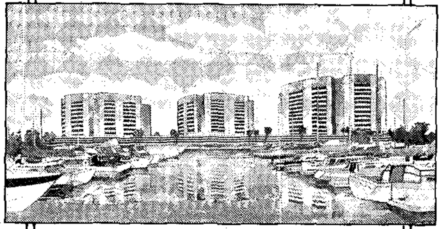

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this might help account for his own restlessness and the wide variety of his interests. He is a delight to read.

THE TWENTY-YEAR CENTURY: ESSAYS ON ECONOMICS AND PUBLIC FINANCE, by Felix G. Rohatyn (Random House; $12.95). A short book composed of short pieces dating back to 1978. The author, the investment banker who became chairman of New York City's Municipal Assistance Corporation in 1975 and helped avert the city's bankruptcy, applies his special knowledge to broader—national and international—questions. He explains why he feels that a reorganization of the international financial system is a necessary prelude to an era of steady prosperity for individual nations, and makes concrete suggestions for dealing with overdue international debts. He believes that Reagan-Thatcher economics cannot offer more than stop-go and that Mitterrand economics are just stop. His concept of an American middle way includes tax increases (on gasoline, for example) and income-tax simplification. He also thinks that negotiating labor contracts annually would help control inflation, because longer-term agreements reflect inflationary expectations. He would like a new Reconstruction Finance Corporation, to support and stimulate American industry. In this plausible, practical book, he cites the example of Jean Monnet, the architect of European economic unity and one of the few great men of history whose legacy is uniformly benign. Mr. Rohatyn merits the compliment of being considered a Monnet-like thinker.

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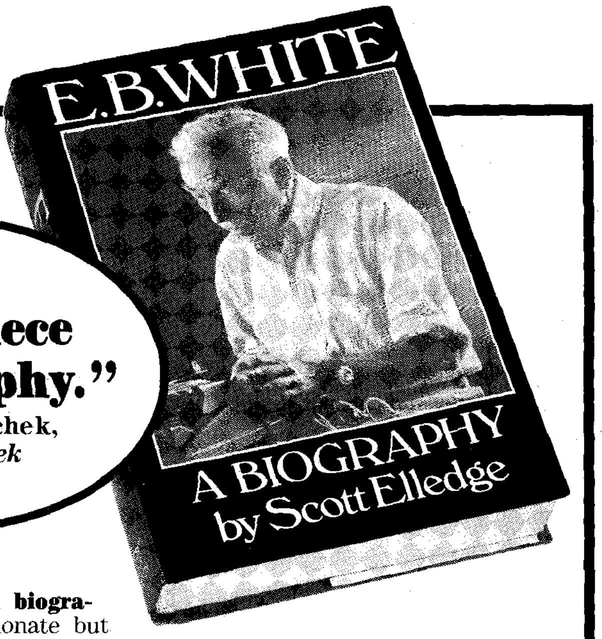

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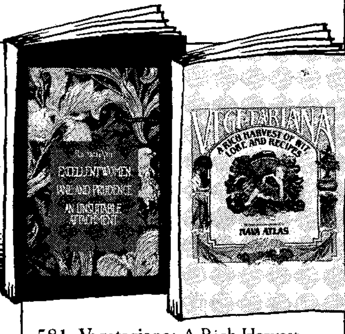

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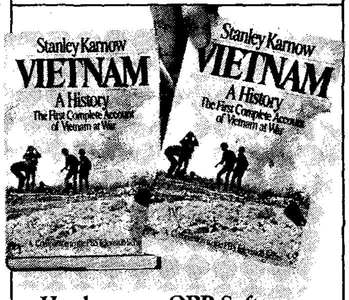
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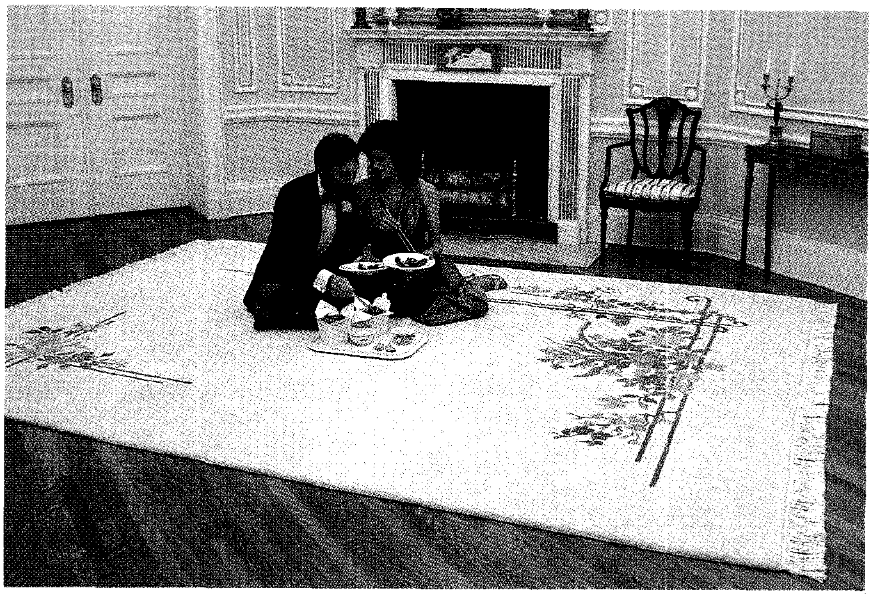

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